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THE WORKS
OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON

LITERARY CLUB EDITION FROM TYPE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME XII

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Picture by Allen Ramsay

DAVID HUME

Works

MISCELLANEOUS

By SAMUEL JOHNSON

PAFRAETS BOOK COMPANY
TROY NEW YORK

Of this Literary Club Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson Seven Hundred and Seventy-four Sets have been printed from type on Special Water Marked Paper, of which this Copy is N° 118

Pafraets Press Troy, New York 1903

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PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE with his excellencies has likewise faults, and faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit. I shall show them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or superstitious veneration. No question can be more innocently discussed than a dead poet's pretensions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which sets candour higher than truth.

His first defect is that to which may be imputed most of the evil in books or in men. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. From his writings, indeed, a system of social duty may be selected, for he that thinks reasonably must think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop casually from him; he makes no just distribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to show in the virtuous a disapprobation of the wicked; he carries his persons indifferently through right and wrong, and, at the close, dismisses them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and justice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often so loosely formed, that a very slight consideration may improve them, and so carelessly pursued, that he seems not always fully to comprehend his own design. He omits opportuni-

ties of instructing or delighting, which the train of his story seems to force upon him, and apparently rejects those exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the sake of those which are more easy.

It may be observed, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himself near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he shortened the labour to snatch the profit. He, therefore, remits his efforts where he should most vigorously exert them, and his catastrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly represented.

He had no regard to distinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without scruple, the customs, institutions, and opinions of another, at the expense not only of likelihood, but of possibility. These faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal than judgment, to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Hector quoting Aristotle, when we see the loves of Theseus and Hippolyta combined with the Gothick mythology of fairies. Shakespeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology, for in the same age Sidney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his Arcadia, confounded the pastoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and security, with those of turbulence, violence, and adventure[a].

[a]The poets and painters before and of Shakespeare's time were all guilty of the same fault. The former "combined the Gothic mythology of fairies" with the fables and traditions of Greek and Roman lore; while the latter dressed out the heroes of antiquity in the arms and cos-

In his comick scenes he is seldom very successful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of smartness and contests of sarcasm; their jests are commonly gross, and their pleasantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he represented the real conversation of his time is not easy to determine; the reign of Elizabeth is commonly supposed to have been a time of stateliness, formality and reserve; yet, perhaps, the relaxations of that severity were not very elegant[b]. There must, however, have been always some modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to choose the best.

In tragedy his performance seems constantly to be worse, as his labour is more. The effusions of passion, which exigence forces out, are, for the most part, striking and energetick; but whenever he solicits his invention, or strains his faculties, the offspring of his throes is tumour, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity.

In narration he affects a disproportionate pomp

tume of their own day. The grand front of Rouen cathedral affords ample and curious illustration of what we state. Mr. Steevens, in his Shakespeare, adds, "that in Arthur Hall's version of the fourth Iliad, Juno says to Jupiter:"

"The time will come that *Totnam French* shall turn."

And in the tenth Book we hear of "The Bastile"; "Lemster wool," and "The Byble."

[b] The relaxations of "England's queen" with her maids of honour were not, if we may credit the existing memoirs of her court, precisely such as modern fastidiousness would assign to the "fair vestal throned by the west."

of diction, and a wearisome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatick poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obstructs the progress of the action; it should, therefore, always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakespeare found it an incumbrance, and instead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and splendour.

His declamations or set speeches are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragick writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and instead of inquiring what the occasion demanded, to show how much his stores of knowledge could supply, he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy sentiment, which he cannot well express, and will not reject; he struggles with it a while, and, if it continues stubborn, comprises it in words such as occur, and leaves it to be disentangled and evolved by those who have more leisure to bestow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate, the thought is subtile, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the equality of words to things is very often neglected, and trivial sentiments and vulgar ideas disappoint the attention, to which

they are recommended by sonorous epithets and swelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have most reason to complain when he approaches nearest to his highest excellence, and seems fully resolved to sink them in dejection, and mollify them with tender emotions, by the fall of greatness, the danger of innocence, or the crosses of love. What he does best, he soon ceases to do. He is not long soft and pathetick without some idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no sooner begins to move, than he counteracts himself; and terrour and pity, as they are rising in the mind, are checked and blasted by sudden frigidity.

A quibble is to Shakespeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller; he follows it at all adventures; it is sure to lead him out of his way, and sure to engulf him in the mire. It has some malignant power over his mind, and its fascinations are irresistible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his disquisitions, whether he be enlarging knowledge or exalting affection, whether he be amusing attention with incidents, or enchaining it in suspense, let but a quibble spring up before him, and he leaves his work unfinished. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aside from his career, or stoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him such delight, that he was content to purchase it, by the sacrifice of reason, propriety and truth. A quibble was to him the

fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it.

It will be thought strange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of those laws which have been instituted and established by the joint authority of poets and of criticks.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I resign him to critical justice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which must be indulged to all human excellence; that his virtues be rated with his failings: but, from the censure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I shall, with due reverence to that learning which I must oppose, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His histories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not subject to any of their laws; nothing more is necessary to all the praise which they expect, than that the changes of action be so prepared as to be understood; that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters consistent, natural and distinct. No other unity is intended, and, therefore, none is to be sought.

In his other works he has well enough preserved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly perplexed and regularly unravelled: he does not endeavour to hide his design only to discover it, for this is seldom the order of real events, and Shakespeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is concatenated with

another, and the conclusion follows by easy consequence. There are, perhaps, some incidents that might be spared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the stage; but the general system makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place he has shown no regard; and, perhaps, a nearer view of the principles on which they stand will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have generally received, by discovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor.

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The criticks hold it impossible, that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, shall lament the untimely fall of his son. The mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality.

From the narrow limitation of time necessarily arises the contraction of place. The spectator, who knows that he saw the first act at Alexandria, cannot suppose that he sees the next at Rome, at a distance to which not the dragons of Medea could,

in so short a time, have transported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itself; that what was a house cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Persepolis.

Such is the triumphant language with which a critick exalts over the misery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without resistance or reply. It is time, therefore, to tell him, by the authority of Shakespeare, that he assumes, as an unquestionable principle, a position, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his understanding pronounces to be false. It is false, that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited.

The objection arising from the impossibility of passing the first hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, supposes, that when the play opens, the spectator really imagines himself at Alexandria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Anthony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the stage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator can be once persuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæsar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state

of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may despise the circumscriptions of terrestrial nature. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in ecstacy should count the clock, or why an hour should not be a century in that calenture of the brains that can make the stage a field.

The truth is, that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players. They come to hear a certain number of lines recited with just gesture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to some action, and an action must be in some place; but the different actions that complete a story may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the absurdity of allowing that space to represent first Athens, and then Sicily, which was always known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre?

By supposition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapses, for the most part, between the acts; for, of so much of the action as is represented, the real and poetical duration is the same. If, in the first act, preparations for war against Mithridates are represented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without absurdity, be represented, in the catastrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama ex-

hibits successive imitations of successive actions; and why may not the second imitation represent an action that happened years after the first, if it be so connected with it, that nothing but time can be supposed to intervene? Time is, of all modes of existence, most obsequious to the imagination; a lapse of years is as easily conceived as a passage of hours. In contemplation we easily contract the time of real actions, and, therefore, willingly permit it to be contracted when we only see their imitation.

It will be asked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited with all the credit due to a drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a just picture of a real original; as representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there feigned to be suffered or to be done. The reflection that strikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourselves may be exposed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourselves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the possibility than suppose the presence of misery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when she remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons real, they would please no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is

recreated by a painted landscape, the trees are not supposed capable to give us shade, or the fountains coolness; but we consider how we should be pleased with such fountains playing beside us, and such woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the history of Henry the fifth, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increase or diminish its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always less. The humour of Petruchio may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what gesture can hope to add dignity or force to the soliloquy of Cato?

A play read, affects the mind like a play acted. It is, therefore, evident, that the action is not supposed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass, and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may pass in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakspeare knew the unities, and rejected them by design, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impossible to decide, and useless to inquire. We may reasonably suppose, that, when he rose to notice, he did not want the counsels and admonitions of scholars and criticks, and that he, at last, deliberately persisted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance. As nothing is essential to the fable but unity of action,

and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions, and, by circumscribing the extent of the drama, lessen its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented, that they were not known by him, or not observed: nor, if such another poet could arise, should I very vehemently reproach him, that his first act passed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules merely positive, become the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare, and such censures are suitable to the minute and slender criticism of Voltaire.

> Non usque adeo permiscuit imis
> Longus summa dies, ut non, si voce Metelli
> Serventur leges, malint a Cæsare tolli.

Yet when I speak thus slightly of dramatick rules, I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced against me; before such authorities I am afraid to stand, not that I think the present question one of those that are to be decided by mere authority, but because it is to be suspected, that these precepts have not been so easily received, but for better reasons than I have yet been able to find. The result of my inquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boast of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not essential to a just drama; that though they may sometimes conduce to pleasure, they are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction; and that a play written with nice observation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curiosity, as the product of superfluous and ostentatious art, by

which is shown, rather what is possible, than what is necessary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, shall preserve all the unities unbroken, deserves the like applause with the architect, who shall display all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its strength; but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy; and the greatest graces of a play are to copy nature, and instruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recall the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almost frighted at my own temerity; and when I estimate the fame and the strength of those that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to sink down in reverential silence; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he saw Neptune shaking the wall, and Juno heading the besiegers.

Those whom my arguments cannot persuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakespeare, will easily, if they consider the condition of his life, make some allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to the reader a book be not worse or better for the circumstances of the author, yet, as there is always a silent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the inquiry, how far man may extend his designs, or how high he

may rate his native force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we shall place any particular performance, curiosity is always busy to discover the instruments, as well as to survey the workmanship, to know how much is to be ascribed to original powers, and how much to casual and adventitious help. The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houses of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with astonishment, who remembered that they were built without the use of iron?

The English nation, in the time of Shakespeare, was yet struggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been transplanted hither in the reign of Henry the eighth; and the learned languages had been successfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Ascham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal schools; and those who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and Spanish poets. But literature was yet confined to professed scholars, or to men and women of high rank. The publick was gross and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accomplishment still valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people newly awakened to literary curiosity, being yet unacquainted with the true state of things, knows not how to judge of that which is proposed as its resemblance. Whatever is remote from common ap-

pearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childish credulity; and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The study of those who then aspired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. The Death of Arthur was the favourite volume.

The mind, which has feasted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taste of the insipidity of truth. A play, which imitated only the common occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of Palmerin and Guy of Warwick, have made little impression; he that wrote for such an audience was under the necessity of looking round for strange events and fabulous transactions; and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings to unskilful curiosity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reasonable to suppose, that he chose the most popular, such as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of the drama, had they not held the thread of the story in their hands.

The stories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were, in his time, accessible and familiar. The fable of As You Like It, which is supposed to be copied from Chaucer's Gamelyn, was a little pamphlet of those times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of Hamlet in plain English

prose, which the criticks have now to seek in Saxo Grammaticus.

His English histories he took from English chronicles and English ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by versions, they supplied him with new subjects; he dilated some of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been translated by North.

His plots, whether historical or fabulous, are always crowded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more easily caught than by sentiment or argumentation; and such is the power of the marvellous, even over those who despise it, that every man finds his mind more strongly seized by the tragedies of Shakespeare than of any other writer: others please us by particular speeches; but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has, perhaps, excelled all but Homer in securing the first purpose of a writer, by exciting restless and unquenchable curiosity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The shows and bustle with which his plays abound have the same original. As knowledge advances, pleasure passes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Those to whom our author's labours were exhibited had more skill in pomps or processions than in poetical language, and, perhaps, wanted some visible and discriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he should most please; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his

example has prejudiced the nation, we still find that on our stage something must be done as well as said, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however musical or elegant, passionate or sublime.

Voltaire expresses his wonder, that our author's extravagancies are endured by a nation, which has seen the tragedy of Cato. Let him be answered, that Addison speaks the language of poets, and Shakespeare of men. We find in Cato innumerable beauties, which enamour us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but Othello is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. Cato affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated, and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades, and scented with flowers; the composition of Shakespeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes giving shelter to myrtles and to roses; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity. Other poets

display cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finished, wrought into shape, and polished into brightness. Shakespeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in unexhaustible plenty, though clouded by incrustations, debased by impurities, and mingled with a mass of meaner minerals.

It has been much disputed, whether Shakespeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of scholastick education, the precepts of critical science, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakespeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much skill in the dead languages. Jonson, his friend, affirms, that "he had small Latin and less Greek;" who, besides that he had no imaginable temptation to falsehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquisitions of Shakespeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought, therefore, to decide the controversy, unless some testimony of equal force could be opposed[c].

Some have imagined, that they have discovered deep learning in many imitations of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged were drawn from books translated in his time; or were such easy coincidences of thought, as will happen to all who consider the same subjects; or such remarks on life, or axioms of morality, as float in

[c] A very full and satisfactory essay on the learning of Shakespeare, may be found in Mr. Malone's edition of Shakespeare, i. 300.

conversation, and are transmitted through the world in proverbial sentences.

I have found it remarked, that, in this important sentence, "Go before, I'll follow," we read a translation of, *I præ, sequar*. I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleasing dream, says, "I cry'd to sleep again," the author imitates Anacreon[d], who had, like every other man, the same wish on the same occasion.

There are a few passages which may pass for imitations, but so few, that the exception only confirms the rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication, and as he used what he had, would have used more if he had obtained it.

The Comedy of Errors is confessedly taken from the Menæchmi of Plautus[e]; from the only play of Plautus which was then in English. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that, would have copied more; but that those which were not translated were inaccessible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have some French scenes proves but little; he might easily procure them to

[d] *Μεμονωμένος δ' ὁ τλήμων*
Ἤλιν ἤθελον καθεύδειν. Anac. 8.

[e] The Comedy of Errors, which has been partly taken by some wretched playwright from the Menæchmi of Plautus, is intolerably stupid: that it may occasionally display the touch of Shakespeare, cannot be denied; but these *purpurei panni* are lamentably infrequent; and, to adopt the language of Mr. Stevens, "that the entire play was no work of his, is an opinion which (as Benedick says) fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake." Dr. Drake's Literary Life of Johnson.— Ed.

be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without assistance. In the story of Romeo and Juliet, he is observed to have followed the English translation, where it deviates from the Italian: but this, on the other part, proves nothing against his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himself, but what was known to his audience.

It is most likely that he had learned Latin sufficiently to make him acquainted with construction, but that he never advanced to an easy perusal of the Roman authors. Concerning his skill in modern languages, I can find no sufficient ground of determination; but as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been discovered, though the Italian poetry was then high in esteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than English, and chose for his fables only such tales as he found translated.

That much knowledge is scattered over his works is very justly observed by Pope; but it is often such knowledge as books did not supply. He that will understand Shakespeare, must not be content to study him in the closet; he must look for his meaning sometimes among the sports of the field, and sometimes among the manufactures of the shop.

There is, however, proof enough that he was a very diligent reader; nor was our language then so indigent of books, but that he might very liberally

indulge his curiosity without excursion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were translated, and some of the Greek[f]; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; most of the topicks of human disquisition had found English writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but success. This was a stock of knowledge sufficient for a mind so capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the English stage in a state of the utmost rudeness; no essays, either in tragedy or comedy, had appeared, from which it could be discovered to what degree of delight either one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet understood. Shakespeare may be truly said to have introduced them both amongst us, and in some of his happier scenes to have carried them both to the utmost height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not easily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unsettled. Rowe is of opinion, that "perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like those of other writers, in his least perfect works; art had so little, and nature so large a share in what he did, that for aught I know," says he, "the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, were the best." But the power of nature is only the power of using to any certain purpose the

[f] A list of these translations may be seen in Malone's Shakespeare, i. 371. It was originally drawn up by Mr. Steevens.— Ed.

materials which diligence procures, or opportunity supplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and, when images are collected by study and experience, can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakespeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and, as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser, as he grew older, could display life better, as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed.

There is a vigilance of observation and accuracy of distinction which books and precepts cannot confer; from this almost all native and original excellence proceeds. Shakespeare must have looked upon mankind with perspicacity, in the highest degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diversify them only by the accidental appendages of present manners; the dress is a little varied, but the body is the same. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in English, and, perhaps, not many in other modern languages, which showed life in its native colours.

The contest about the original benevolence or malignity of man had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyze the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or sound

the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those inquiries, which from that time that human nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleaning his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its business and amusements.

Boyle congratulated himself upon his high birth, because it favoured his curiosity, by facilitating his access. Shakespeare had no such advantage: he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in states of life that appear very little favourable to thought or to inquiry; so many, that he who considers them is inclined to think that he sees enterprize and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The genius of Shakespeare was not to be depressed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the encumbrances of his fortune were shaken from his mind, "as dewdrops from a lion's mane."

Though he had so many difficulties to encounter, and so little assistance to surmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many casts of native dispositions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice distinctions; and to show them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has himself been imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted, whether from all his successors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist. It may be observed, that the oldest poets of many nations preserve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a short celebrity, sink into oblivion. The first, whoever they be, must take their sentiments and descriptions immediately from knowledge; the resemblance is, therefore, just, their descriptions are verified by every eye, and their sentiments acknowledged by every breast. Those whom their fame invites to the same studies, copy partly them and partly nature, till the books of one age gain such authority, as to stand in the place of nature to another, and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at last capricious and casual. Shakespeare, whether life or

nature be his subject, shows plainly that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be easy to find any author, except Homer, who invented so much as Shakespeare, who so much advanced the studies which he cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his age or country. The form, the characters, the language, and the shows of the English drama are his. "He seems," says Dennis, "to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trisyllable terminations. For the diversity distinguishes it from heroick harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common use makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation.[g]"

I know not whether this praise is rigorously just. The dissyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in Gorboduc, which is confessedly before our author; yet in Hieronymo[h] of which the date is not certain, but which there is reason to believe, at least, as old as his earliest plays. This, however, is

[g] See Dryden in the Epistle Dedicatory to his Rival Ladies.— Ed.

[h] It appears, from the induction of Ben Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair," to have been acted before the year 1590.— Steevens.

certain, that he is the first who taught either tragedy or comedy to please, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are sought because they are scarce, and would not have been scarce, had they been much esteemed.

To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps, sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours, indeed, commonly to strike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better, than when he tries to sooth by softness.

Yet it must be at last confessed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes something to us; that, if much of his praise is paid by perception and judgment, much is, likewise, given by custom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformities, and endure in him what we should in another loathe or despise. If we endured without praising, respect for the father of our drama might excuse us; but I have seen, in the book of some modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which show that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence; but, perhaps, not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer,

would be heard to the conclusion. I am, indeed, far from thinking that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were such as would satisfy the audience, they satisfied the writer. It is seldom that authors, though more studious of fame than Shakespeare, rise much above the standard of their own age; to add a little to what is best will always be sufficient for present praise; and those who find themselves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiasts, and to spare the labour of contending with themselves.

It does not appear, that Shakespeare thought his works worthy of posterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further prospect, than of present popularity and present profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader. He, therefore, made no scruple to repeat the same jests in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the same knot of perplexity; which may be at least forgiven him, by those who recollect that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a mask, by a deception, which, perhaps, never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careless was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be disgusted with fatigue, or disabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor desired to rescue those that had been already pub-

lished from the depravations that obscured them, or secure to the rest a better destiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine state.

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakespeare in the late editions, the greater part were not published till about seven years after his death; and the few which appeared in his life are apparently thrust into the world without the care of the author, and, therefore, probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publishers, clandestine or professed, the negligence and unskilfulness has, by the late revisers, been sufficiently shown. The faults of all are, indeed, numerous and gross, and have not only corrupted many passages, perhaps, beyond recovery, but have brought others into suspicion, which are only obscured by obsolete phraseology, or by the writer's unskilfulness and affectation. To alter is more easy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Those who saw that they must employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author published his own works, we should have sat quietly down to disentangle his intricacies, and clear his obscurities; but now we tear what we cannot loose, and eject what we happen not to understand.

The faults are more than could have happened without the concurrence of many causes. The style of Shakespeare was in itself ungrammatical, perplexed, and obscure; his works were transcribed for the players by those who may be supposed to have seldom understood them; they were transmitted by

copiers equally unskilful, who still multiplied errours; they were, perhaps, sometimes mutilated by the actors, for the sake of shortening the speeches; and were at last printed without correction of the press[1].

In this state they remained, not, as Dr. Warburton supposes, because they were unregarded, but because the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our ancestors were accustomed to so much negligence of English printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At last an edition was undertaken by Rowe; not because a poet was to be published by a poet, for Rowe seems to have thought very little on correction or explanation; but that our author's works might appear like those of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and recommendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorously blamed for not performing what he did not undertake; and it is time that justice be done him, by confessing, that, though he seems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errours, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his successors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with censures of the stupidity by which the faults were committed, with displays of the absurdities which they involved, with ostentatious expositions

[1] The errors of the prompter's books of the present day excite the violent invective of Mr. Steevens, in his notes on Johnson's Preface.— Ed.

of the new reading, and self-congratulations on the happiness of discovering it.

As of the other editors I have preserved the prefaces, I have likewise borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or spirit; it relates, however, what is now to be known, and, therefore, deserves to pass through all succeeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true state of Shakespeare's text, showed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reason to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and restored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticism, he rejected whatever he disliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for distinguishing the genuine from the spurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received were given by Hemings and Condel, the first editors; and those which he rejected, though, according to the licentiousness of the press in those times, they were printed during Shakespeare's life, with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the later printers.

This was a work which Pope seems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to

suppress his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor.* He understood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is, indeed, dull, yet, like other tedious tasks, is very necessary; but an emendatory critick would ill discharge his duty, without qualities very different from dulness. In perusing a corrupted piece, he must have before him all possibilities of meaning, with all possibilities of expression. Such must be his comprehension of thought, and such his copiousness of language. Out of many readings possible, he must be able to select that which bests suits with the state, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular cast of thought, and turn of expression. Such must be his knowledge, and such his taste. Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses, and he that exercises it with most praise, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common consequence of success. They whose excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude that their powers are universal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was so much offended when he was found to have left any thing for others to do, that he passed the latter part of his life in a state of hostility with verbal criticism.

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of so great a writer may be lost; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of composition and justness of remark, and containing a general criticism on his

author, so extensive that little can be added, and so exact that little can be disputed, every editor has an interest to suppress, but that every reader would demand its insertion.

Pope was succeeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehension, and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsick splendour of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in pursuing it. He collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errours. A man so anxiously scrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions he is not to be trusted without examination. He speaks sometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two first folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the first is equivalent to all others, and that the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce[j]. I collated them all, at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first.

j This assertion is contradicted by Steevens and Malone, as regards the second edition 1632. The former editor says, that it has the advantage of various readings which are not merely such as reiteration of copies will produce. The curious examiner of Shakespeare's text, who possesses the first of these folio editions, ought not to be unfurnished with the second. See Malone's List of Early Editions in his Shakespeare, ii. 656.— Ed.

Of his notes I have generally retained those which he retained himself in his second edition, except when they were confuted by subsequent annotators, or where too minute to merit preservation. I have sometimes adopted his restoration of a comma, without inserting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himself for his achievement. The exuberant excrescence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have sometimes suppressed, and his contemptible ostentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in some places shown him, as he would have shown himself, for the reader's diversion, that the inflated emptiness of some notes may justify or excuse the contraction of the rest.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithless, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has escaped, and escaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour against those who command reverence; and so easily is he praised whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for such studies. He had, what is the first requisite to emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which despatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his ac-

quaintance with customs, opinions, and traditions, seems to have been large; and he is often learned without show. He seldom passes what he does not understand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and sometimes hastily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is solicitous to reduce to grammar whas he could not be sure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakespeare regarded more the series of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being designed for the reader's desk, was all that he desired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently censured. He found the measure reformed in so many passages by the silent labours of some editors, with the silent acquiescence of the rest, that he thought himself allowed to extend a little further the license, which had already been carried so far without reprehension; and, of his corrections in general, it must be confessed, that they are often just, and made commonly with the least possible violation of the text.

But, by inserting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predecessors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himself and others, was too great; he supposes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he seems not to suspect a critick of fallibility; and

it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful inquiry and diligent consideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wish for more.

Of the last editor it is more difficult to speak. Respect is due to high place, tenderness to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be justly offended at that liberty of which he has himself so frequently given an example, nor very solicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardour of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions.

The original and predominant errour of his commentary is acquiescence in his first thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by consciousness of quick discernment; and that confidence which presumes to do, by surveying the surface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit sometimes perverse interpretations, and sometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the sentence admits, and at another discovers absurdities, where the sense is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewise often happy and just; and his interpretation of obscure passages learned and sagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected, those against which the general voice of the publick has

exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I suppose, the author himself would desire to be forgotten. Of the rest, to part I have given the highest approbation, by inserting the offered reading in the text; part I have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though specious; and part I have censured without reserve, but, I am sure, without bitterness of malice, and, I hope, without wantonness of insult.

It is no pleasure to me, in revising my volumes, to observe how much paper is wasted in confutation. Whoever considers the revolutions of learning, and the various questions of greater or less importance, upon which wit and reason have exercised their powers, must lament the unsuccessfulness of inquiry, and the slow advances of truth, when he reflects that great part of the labour of every writer is only the destruction of those that went before him. The first care of the builder of a new system, is to demolish the fabricks which are standing. The chief desire of him that comments an author, is to show how much other commentators have corrupted and obscured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controversy, are confuted and rejected in another, and rise again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progress. Thus sometimes truth and errour, and sometimes contrarieties of errour, take each other's place by reciprocal invasion. The tide of seeming knowledge, which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves an-

other naked and barren; the sudden meteors of intelligence, which for awhile appear to shoot their beams into the regions of obscurity, on a sudden withdraw their lustre, and leave mortals again to grope their way.

These elevations and depressions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of knowledge must for ever be exposed, since they are not escaped by the highest and brightest of mankind, may, surely, be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themselves but as the satellites of their authors. How canst thou beg for life, says Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knowest that thou art now to suffer only what must another day be suffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name sufficient to confer celebrity on those who could exalt themselves into antagonists, and his notes have raised a clamour too loud to be distinct. His chief assailants are the authors of The Canons of Criticism, and of the Revisal of Shakespeare's Text; of whom one ridicules his errours with airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to justice an assassin or incendiary. The one stings like a fly, sucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of Coriolanus, who was afraid that "girls with spits, and boys with

stones, should slay him in puny battle;" when the other crosses my imagination, I remember the prodigy in Macbeth:

> A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
> Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Let me, however, do them justice. One is a wit, and one a scholar[k]. They have both shown acuteness sufficient in the discovery of faults, and have both advanced some probable interpretations of obscure passages; but when they aspire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falsely we all estimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, Critical Observations on Shakespeare had been published by Mr. Upton[l], a man skilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who seems to have had no great vigour of genius or nicety of taste. Many of his explanations are curious and useful, but he, likewise, though he professed to oppose the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to restrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill seconded by his skill. Every cold empirick, when his heart is expanded by a success-

[k] It is extraordinary that this gentleman should attempt so voluminous a work, as the Revisal of Shakespeare's text, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not so fortunate as to be furnished with either of the folio editions, much less any of the ancient quartos: and even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by Dr. Warburton's representation." — FARMER.

[l] Republished by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c.— STEEVENS.

ful experiment, swells into a theorist, and the laborious collator of some unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

Critical, historical, and explanatory notes have been, likewise, published upon Shakespeare by Dr. Grey, whose diligent perusal of the old English writers has enabled him to make some useful observations. What he undertook he has well enough performed; but as he neither attempts judicial or emendatory criticism, he employs rather his memory than his sagacity. It were to be wished that all would endeavour to imitate his modesty, who have not been able to surpass his knowledge.

I can say, with great sincerity, of all my predecessors, what I hope will hereafter be said of me, that not one has left Shakespeare without improvement; nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for assistance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed when I wrote it to be my own. In some, perhaps, I have been anticipated; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentators, I am willing that the honour, be it more or less, should be transferred to the first claimant, for his right, and his alone, stands above dispute; the second can prove his pretensions only to himself, nor can himself always distinguish invention, with sufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour,

which they have not been careful of observing to one another. It is not easy to discover from what cause the acrimony of a scholiast can naturally proceed. The subjects to be discussed by him are of very small importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the interest of sect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a passage, seem to be questions that might exercise the wit, without engaging the passions. But whether it be that "small things make mean men proud," and vanity catches small occasions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in those that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentaries a spontaneous strain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politicks against those whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightness of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be investigated is so near to inexistence, as to escape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original state, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has, indeed, great temptations to supply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illustrative, by which difficulties are explained;

or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked; or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations transcribed from others, if I do not subjoin any other interpretation, I suppose commonly to be right, at least I intend by acquiescence to confess, that I have nothing better to propose.

After the labours of all the editors, I found many passages which appeared to me likely to obstruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their passage. It is impossible for an expositor not to write too little for some, and too much for others. He can only judge what is necessary by his own experience; and how long soever he may deliberate, will at last explain many lines which the learned will think impossible to be mistaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. These are censures merely relative, and must be quietly endured. I have endeavoured to be neither superfluously copious, nor scrupulously reserved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning accessible to many, who before were frighted from perusing him, and contributed something to the publick, by diffusing innocent and rational pleasure.

The complete explanation of an author not systematick and consequential, but desultory and vagrant, abounding in casual allusions and light hints, is not to be expected from any single scholiast. All personal reflections, when names are suppressed, must be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated; and customs, too minute to attract the

notice of law, such as modes of dress, formalities of conversation, rules of visits, disposition of furniture, and practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are so fugitive and unsubstantial, that they are not easily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the recesses of obscure and obsolete papers, perused commonly with some other view. Of this knowledge every man has some, and none has much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, those who can add any thing to his illustration, communicate their discoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to resign many passages, which, though I did not understand them, will, perhaps, hereafter be explained; having, I hope, illustrated some, which others have neglected or mistaken, sometimes by short remarks, or marginal directions, such as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will seem to deserve; but that which is most difficult is not always most important, and to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obscured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to observe. Some plays have more, and some fewer judicial observations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but because I gave this part of my design to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is seldom pleased to find his

opinion anticipaled; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive. Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by submission to dictatorial decisions, as the memory grows torpid by the use of a table-book. Some initiation is, however, necessary; of all skill, part is infused by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have, therefore, shown so much as may enable the candidate of criticism to discover the rest.

To the end of most plays I have added short strictures, containing a general censure of faults, or praise of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of singularity, deviated from it. Nothing is minutely and particularly examined, and, therefore, it is to be supposed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praised, and in those which are praised much to be condemned.

The part of criticism in which the whole succession of editors has laboured with the greatest diligence, which has occasioned the most arrogant ostentation, and excited the keenest acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted passages, to which the publick attention, having been first drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the persecution, which, with a kind of conspiracy, has been since raised against all the publishers of Shakespeare.

That many passages have passed in a state of dep-

ravation through all the editions, is indubitably certain; of these the restoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or sagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is safe and easy, the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet, as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril must not be avoided, nor the difficulty refused.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, some from the labours of every publisher I have advanced into the text; those are to be considered as, in my opinion, sufficiently supported; some I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; some I have left in the notes without censure or approbation, as resting in equipoise between objection and defence; and some, which seemed specious but not right, I have inserted with a subsequent animadversion.

Having classed the observations of others, I was at last to try what I could substitute for their mistakes, and how I could supply their omissions. I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindness put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By examining the old copies, I soon found that the later publishers, with all their boasts of diligence, suffered many passages to stand unauthorized, and contented themselves with Rowe's regulation of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and

with a little consideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of these alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. These corruptions I have often silently rectified; for the history of our language, and the true force of our words, can only be preserved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and those very frequent, smoothed the cadence, or regulated the measure: on these I have not exercised the same rigour; if only a word was transposed, or a particle inserted or omitted, I have sometimes suffered the line to stand; for the inconstancy of the copies is such, as that some liberties may be easily permitted. But this practice I have not suffered to proceed far, having restored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reason be preferred.

The emendations, which comparison of copies supplied, I have inserted in the text: sometimes, where the improvement was slight, without notice, and sometimes with an account of the reasons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be sometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiously indulged. It has been my settled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and, therefore, is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely

to read it right, than we, who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made strange mistakes by ignorance or negligence, and that, therefore, something may be properly attempted by criticism, keeping the middle way between presumption and timidity.

Such criticism I have attempted to practise, and, where any passage appeared inextricably perplexed have endeavoured to discover how it may be recalled to sense, with least violence. But my first labour is, always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice, through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himself condemn me, as refusing the trouble of research, for the ambition of alteration. In this modest industry I have not been unsuccessful, I have rescued many lines from the violations of temerity, and secured many scenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman sentiment, that it is more honourable to save a citizen than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preserved the common distribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almost all the plays void of authority. Some of those which are divided in the later editions have no division in the first folio, and some that are divided in the folio have no division in the preceding copies. The settled mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play; but few, if any, of our author's compositions can be properly distributed in that manner. An act is so much of the drama as passes without interven-

tion of time, or change of place. A pause makes a new act. In every real, and, therefore, in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the restriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakespeare knew, and this he practised; his plays were written, and, at first, printed in one unbroken continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with short pauses, interposed as often as the scene is changed, or any considerable time is required to pass. This method would at once quell a thousand absurdities.

In restoring the author's works to their integrity, I have considered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and sentences? Whatever could be done by adjusting points, is, therefore, silently performed, in some plays with much diligence, in others with less; it is hard to keep a busy eye steadily fixed upon evanescent atoms, or a discursive mind upon evanescent truth.

The same liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of slight effect. I have sometimes inserted or omitted them without notice. I have done that sometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which, indeed, the state of the text may sufficiently justify.

The greater part of readers, instead of blaming us for passing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles so much labour is expended, with such importance of debate, and such solemnity of diction. To these I answer with confidence, that they are judging of an

art which they do not understand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promise that they would become in general, by learning criticism, more useful, happier, or wiser.

As I practised conjecture more, I learned to trust it less; and after I had printed a few plays, resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myself, for every day increases my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it must not be considered as very reprehensible, if I have suffered it to play some freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be proposed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, those changes may be safely offered, which are not considered, even by him that offers them, as necessary or safe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been ostentatiously displayed or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of the former editors, and showing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and absurdity of the old reading; then by proposing something, which to superficial readers would seem specious, but which the editor rejects with indignation; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphrase, and concluding with loud acclamations

on the discovery, and a sober wish for the advancement and prosperity of genuine criticism.

All this may be done, and, perhaps, done sometimes without impropriety. But I have always suspected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without so much labour appear to be right. The justness of a happy restoration strikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticism, "quod dubitas ne feceris."

To dread the shore which he sees spread with wrecks, is natural to the sailor. I had before my eye so many critical adventures ended in miscarriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page, wit struggling with its own sophistry, and learning confused by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to censure those whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was dispossessing their emendations, how soon the same fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be, by some other editor, defended and established.

> Critics I saw, that others' names efface,
> And fix their own, with labour, in the place;
> Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
> Or disappear'd, and left the first behind. POPE.

That a conjectural critick should often be mistaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himself, if it be considered, that in his art there is no system, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates subordinate positions. His chance of errour is

renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the passage, a slight misapprehension of a phrase, a casual inattention to the parts connected, is sufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculously; and when he succeeds best, he produces, perhaps, but one reading of many probable, and he that suggests another will always be able to dispute his claims.

It is an unhappy state, in which danger is hid under pleasure. The allurements of emendation are scarcely resistible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once started a happy change, is too much delighted to consider what objections may rise against it.

Yet conjectural criticism has been of great use in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a study, that has exercised so many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the bishop of Aleria[m] to English Bentley. The criticks on ancient authors have, in the exercise of their sagacity, many assistances, which the editor of Shakespeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and settled languages, whose construction contributes so much to perspic-

[m] John Andreas. He was secretary to the Vatican library during the papacies of Paul the second and Sixtus the fourth. By the former, he was employed to superintend such works as were to be multiplied by the new art of printing, at that time brought into Rome. He published Herodotus, Strabo, Livy, Aulus Gellius, &c. His schoolfellow, Cardinal de Cusa, procured him the bishopric of Accia, a province in Corsica; and Paul the second afterwards appointed him to that of Aleria, in the same island, where he died in 1493. See Fabric. Bibl. Lat. iii. 894, and Steevens, in Malone's Shak. i. 106.

uity, that Homer has fewer passages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuscripts than one; and they do not often conspire in the same mistakes. Yet Scaliger could confess to Salmasius how little satisfaction his emendations gave him: "Illudunt nobis conjecturæ nostræ, quarum nos pudet, posteaquam in meliores codices incidimus." And Lipsius could complain that criticks were making faults, by trying to remove them: "Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur." And, indeed, where mere conjecture is to be used, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipsius, notwithstanding their wonderful sagacity and erudition, are often vague and disputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more censured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raising in the publick expectations which at last I have not answered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to satisfy those who know not what to demand, or those who demand by design what they think impossible to be done. I have, indeed, disappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my task with no slight solicitude. Not a single passage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to restore; or obscure, which I have not endeavoured to illustrate. In many I have failed, like others; and from many, after all my efforts, I have retreated, and confessed

the repulse. I have not passed over, with affected superiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but, where I could not instruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might easily have accumulated a mass of seeming learning upon easy scenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that, where nothing was necessary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have said enough, I have said no more.

Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

Particular passages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is refrigerated by interruption; the thoughts are diverted from the principal subject; the reader is weary, he suspects not why; and at last throws away the book which he has too diligently studied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has

been surveyed; there is a kind of intellectual remoteness necessary for the comprehension of any great work in its full design and in its true proportion; a close approach shows the smaller niceties, but the beauty of the whole is discerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him; while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his allusions understood; yet then did Dryden pronounce "that Shakespeare was the man, who, of all modern and, perhaps, ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those, who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned: he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is every where alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat and insipid; his comick wit degenerating into clinches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him: no man can say, he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi."

It is to be lamented that such a writer should want a commentary; that his language should become obsolete, or his sentiments obscure. But it is vain to carry wishes beyond the condition of human things; that which must happen to all, has happened to Shakespeare, by accident and time; and more than has been suffered by any other writer since the use of types[n], has been suffered by him through his own negligence of fame, or, perhaps, by that superiority of mind, which despised its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged those works unworthy to be preserved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining.

Among these candidates of inferiour fame, I am now to stand the judgment of the publick; and wish that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient, and I should feel little solicitude about the sentence, were it to be pronounced only by the skilful and the learned.

[n] See this assertion refuted by examples in a former note.— Ed.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

TEMPEST

IT is observed of The Tempest, that its plan is regular; this the author of The Revisal° thinks, what I think too, an accidental effect of the story, not intended or regarded by our author. But whatever might be Shakespeare's intention in forming or adopting the plot, he has made it instrumental to the production of many characters, diversified with boundless invention, and preserved with profound skill in nature, extensive knowledge of opinions, and accurate observation of life. In a single drama are here exhibited princes, courtiers, and sailors, all speaking in their real characters. There is the agency of airy spirits, and of an earthly goblin; the operations of magick, the tumults of a storm, the adventures of a desert island, the native effusion of untaught affection, the punishment of guilt, and the final happiness of the pair for whom our passions and reason are equally interested.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

In this play there is a strange mixture of knowledge and ignorance, of care and negligence. The versification is often excellent, the allusions are learned and just; but the author conveys his heroes by sea from one inland town to another in the same country; he places the emperour at Milan, and sends his young men to attend him, but never mentions

°Mr. Heath, who wrote a Revisal of Shakespeare's text, published in 8vo. circa 1760.

him more; he makes Protheus, after an interview with Silvia, say he has only seen her picture[p]; and, if we may credit the old copies, he has, by mistaking places, left his scenery inextricable. The reason of all this confusion seems to be, that he took his story from a novel, which he sometimes followed, and sometimes forsook, sometimes remembered, and sometimes forgot.

That this play is rightly attributed to Shakespeare, I have little doubt. If it be taken from him, to whom shall it be given? This question may be asked of all the disputed plays, except Titus Andronicus; and it will be found more credible that Shakespeare might sometimes sink below his highest flights, than that any other should rise up to his lowest.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

Of this play there is a tradition preserved by Mr. Rowe, that it was written at the command of queen Elizabeth, who was so delighted with the character of Falstaff, that she wished it to be diffused through more plays; but, suspecting that it might pall by continued uniformity, directed the poet to diversify his manner, by showing him in love. No task is

[p] This is not a blunder of Shakespeare's, but a mistake of Johnson's, who considers the passage alluded to in a more literal sense than the author intended it. Sir Proteus, it is true, had seen Silvia for a few moments; but though he could form from thence some idea of her person, he was still unacquainted with her temper, manners, and the qualities of her mind. He, therefore, considers himself as having seen her picture only. The thought is just and elegantly expressed. So in the Scornful Lady, the elder Loveless says to her, "I was mad once when I loved pictures. For what are *shape* and *colours* else but *pictures?*" — Mason in Malone's Shak. iv. 137.— Ed.

harder than that of writing to the ideas of another. Shakespeare knew what the queen, if the story be true, seems not to have known, that by any real passion of tenderness, the selfish craft, the careless jollity, and the lazy luxury of Falstaff must have suffered so much abatement, that little of his former cast would have remained. Falstaff could not love, but by ceasing to be Falstaff. He could only counterfeit love, and his professions could be prompted, not by the hope of pleasure, but of money. Thus the poet approached as near as he could to the work enjoined him; yet having, perhaps, in the former plays, completed his own idea, seems not to have been able to give Falstaff all his former power of entertainment.

This comedy is remarkable for the variety and number of the personages, who exhibit more characters appropriated and discriminated, than, perhaps, can be found in any other play.

Whether Shakespeare was the first that produced upon the English stage the effect of language distorted and depraved by provincial or foreign pronunciation, I cannot certainly decide[q]. This mode

[q] In the Three Ladies of London, 1584, is the character of an Italian merchant, very strongly marked by foreign pronunciation. Dr. Dodypoll, in the Comedy which bears his name, is, like Caius, a French physician. This piece appeared, at least, a year before The Merry Wives of Windsor. The hero of it speaks such another jargon as the antagonist of Sir Hugh, and, like him, is cheated of his mistress. In several other pieces, more ancient than the earliest of Shakespeare's, provincial characters are introduced. — Steevens.

In the old play of Henry V. French soldiers are introduced speaking broken English.— Boswell.

of forming ridiculous characters can confer praise only on him who originally discovered it, for it requires not much of either wit or judgment; its success must be derived almost wholly from the player, but its power in a skilful mouth even he that despises it is unable to resist.

The conduct of this drama is deficient; the action begins and ends often before the conclusion, and the different parts might change places without inconvenience; but its general power, that power by which all works of genius shall finally be tried, is such, that, perhaps, it never yet had reader or spectator, who did not think it too soon at an end.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

There is, perhaps, not one of Shakespeare's plays more darkened than this, by the peculiarities of its author, and the unskilfulness of its editors, by distortions of phrase, or negligence of transcription.

The novel of Giraldi Cynthio, from which Shakespeare is supposed to have borrowed this fable, may be read in Shakespeare Illustrated, elegantly translated, with remarks, which will assist the inquirer to discover how much absurdity Shakespeare has admitted or avoided.

I cannot but suspect that some other had new modelled the novel of Cynthio, or written a story which, in some particulars, resembled it, and that Cynthio was not the author whom Shakespeare immediately followed. The emperour, in Cynthio, is named Maximine; the duke, in Shakespeare's

enumeration of the persons of the drama, is called Vincentio. This appears a very slight remark; but since the duke has no name in the play, nor is ever mentioned but by his title, why should he be called Vincentio among the persons, but because the name was copied from the story, and placed superfluously at the head of the list, by the mere habit of transcription? It is, therefore, likely that there was then a story of Vincentio duke of Vienna, different from that of Maximine emperour of the Romans.

Of this play, the light or comick part is very natural and pleasing, but the grave scenes, if a few passages be excepted, have more labour than elegance. The plot is rather intricate than artful. The time of the action is indefinite; some time, we know not how much, must have elapsed between the recess of the duke and the imprisonment of Claudio; for he must have learned the story of Mariana in his disguise, or he delegated his power to a man already known to be corrupted. The unities of action and place are sufficiently preserved.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

In this play, which all the editors have concurred to censure, and some have rejected as unworthy of our poet, it must be confessed that there are many passages mean, childish and vulgar; and some which ought not to have been exhibited, as we are told they were, to a maiden queen. But there are scattered through the whole many sparks of genius; nor

is there any play that has more evident marks of the hand of Shakespeare[r].

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts, in their various modes, are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed. Fairies in his time were much in fashion; common tradition had made them familiar, and Spenser's poem had made them great[s].

MERCHANT OF VENICE

It has been lately discovered, that this fable is taken from a story in the Pecorone[t] of Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, a novelist, who wrote in 1378. The story has been published in English, and I have epitomized the translation. The translator is of opinion that the choice of the caskets is borrowed from a tale of Boccace, which I have, likewise, abridged, though I believe that Shakespeare must have had some other novel in view.

[r] See, however, Dr. Drake's Essays on Rambler &c. ii. 392.— Ed.

[s] Johnson's concluding observation on this play, is not conceived with his usual judgment. There is no analogy or resemblance whatever between the fairies of Spenser, and those of Shakespeare. The fairies of Spenser, as appears from his description of them in the second book of the Faerie Queene, Canto 10. were a race of mortals created by Prometheus, of the human size, shape, and affections, and subject to death. But those of Shakespeare, and of common tradition, as Johnson calls them, were a diminutive race of sportful beings, endowed with immortality and supernatural power, totally different from those of Spenser.— M. Mason.

[t] The first novel of the fourth day. An epitome of the novels, from which the story of this play is supposed to be taken, is appended to it in Malone's edition, v. 154.

Of the Merchant of Venice the style is even and easy, with few peculiarities of diction, or anomalies of construction. The comick part raises laughter, and the serious fixes expectation. The probability of either one or the other story cannot be maintained. The union of two actions in one event is, in this drama, eminently happy. Dryden was much pleased with his own address in connecting the two plots of his Spanish Friar, which yet, I believe, the critick will find excelled by this play.

AS YOU LIKE IT

Of this play the fable is wild and pleasing. I know not how the ladies will approve the facility with which both Rosalind and Celia give away their hearts. To Celia much may be forgiven for the heroism of her friendship. The character of Jaques is natural and well preserved. The comick dialogue is very sprightly, with less mixture of low buffoonery than in some other plays; and the graver part is elegant and harmonious. By hastening to the end of his work, Shakespeare suppressed the dialogue between the usurper and the hermit, and lost an opportunity of exhibiting a moral lesson, in which he might have found matter worthy of his highest powers.

TAMING OF THE SHREW

Of this play the two plots are so well united, that they can hardly be called two, without injury to the art with which they are interwoven. The attention

is entertained with all the variety of a double plot, yet is not distracted by unconnected incidents.

The part between Catharine and Petruchio is eminently sprightly and diverting. At the marriage of Bianca, the arrival of the real father, perhaps, produces more perplexity than pleasure. The whole play is very popular and diverting.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

This play has many delightful scenes, though not sufficiently probable, and some happy characters, though not new, nor produced by any deep knowledge of human nature. Parolles is a boaster and a coward, such as has always been the sport of the stage, but, perhaps, never raised more laughter or contempt than in the hands of Shakespeare.

I cannot reconcile my heart to Bertram; a man noble without generosity, and young without truth; who marries Helen as a coward, and leaves her as a profligate: when she is dead by his unkindness, sneaks home to a second marriage, is accused by a woman whom he has wronged, defends himself by falsehood and is dismissed to happiness[u].

The story of Bertram and Diana had been told before of Mariana and Angelo, and, to confess the truth, scarcely merited to be heard a second time.

TWELFTH NIGHT

This play is, in the graver part, elegant and easy,

[u] This opinion of the character of Bertram is examined at considerable length in the New Monthly Magazine, iv. 481.— Ed.

and, in some of the lighter scenes, exquisitely humorous. Aguecheek is drawn with great propriety, but his character is, in a great measure, that of natural fatuity, and is, therefore, not the proper prey of a satirist. The soliloquy of Malvolio is truly comick; he is betrayed to ridicule merely by his pride. The marriage of Olivia, and the succeeding perplexity, though well enough contrived to divert on the stage, wants credibility, and fails to produce the proper instruction required in the drama, as it exhibits no just picture of life.

WINTER'S TALE

The story of this play is taken from The Pleasant History of Dorastus and Fawnia, written by Robert Greene.

This play, as Dr. Warburton justly observes, is, with all its absurdities, very entertaining. The character of Autolycus is very naturally conceived, and strongly represented.

MACBETH

This play is deservedly celebrated for the propriety of its fictions, and solemnity, grandeur, and variety of its action; but it has no nice discriminations of character; the events are too great to admit the influence of particular dispositions, and the course of the action necessarily determines the conduct of the agents.

The danger of ambition is well described; and I know not whether it may not be said, in defence of some parts which now seem improbable, that, in

Shakespeare's time, it was necessary to warn credulity against vain and elusive predictions.

The passions are directed to their true end. Lady Macbeth is merely detested; and though the courage of Macbeth preserves some esteem, yet every reader rejoices at his fall.

KING JOHN

The tragedy of King John, though not written with the utmost power of Shakespeare, is varied with a very pleasing interchange of incidents and characters. The lady's grief is very affecting, and the character of the bastard contains that mixture of greatness and levity which this author delighted to exhibit.

KING RICHARD II

This play is extracted from the Chronicle of Holinshed, in which many passages may be found which Shakespeare has, with very little alteration, transplanted into his scenes; particularly a speech of the bishop of Carlisle in defence of King Richard's unalienable right, and immunity from human jurisdiction.

Jonson, who, in his Catiline and Sejanus, has inserted many speeches from the Roman historians, was perhaps, induced to that practice by the example of Shakespeare, who had condescended sometimes to copy more ignoble writers. But Shakespeare had more of his own than Jonson, and, if he sometimes was willing to spare his labour, showed by what he performed at other times, that his ex-

tracts were made by choice or idleness rather than necessity.

This play is one of those which Shakespeare has apparently revised[v]; but as success in works of invention is not always proportionate to labour, it is not finished at last with the happy force of some other of his tragedies, nor can be said much to affect the passions or enlarge the understanding.

KING HENRY IV. PART II

I fancy every reader, when he ends this play, cries out with Desdemona, "O most lame and impotent conclusion!" As this play was not, to our knowledge, divided into acts by the author, I could be content to conclude it with the death of Henry the Fourth.

"In that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

These scenes, which now make the fifth act of Henry IV. might then be the first of Henry V. but the truth is, that they do not unite very commodiously to either play. When these plays were represented, I believe they ended as they are now ended in the books; but Shakespeare seems to have designed that the whole series of action, from the beginning of Richard II. to the end of Henry V. should be considered by the reader as one work, upon one plan, only broken into parts by the necessity of exhibition.

[v] The notion that Shakespeare revised this play, though it has long prevailed, appears to me extremely doubtful; or to speak more plainly, I do not believe it. MALONE. See too the Essay on the Chronological order of Shakespeare's plays, Malone's edition. ii.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

None of Shakespeare's plays are more read than the first and second parts of Henry IV. Perhaps no author has ever in two plays afforded so much delight. The great events are interesting, for the fate of kingdoms depends upon them; the slighter occurrences are diverting, and, except one or two, sufficiently probable; the incidents are multiplied with wonderful fertility of invention, and the characters diversified with the utmost nicety of discernment, and the profoundest skill in the nature of man.

The prince, who is the hero both of the comick and tragick part, is a young man of great abilities and violent passions, whose sentiments are right, though his actions are wrong; whose virtues are obscured by negligence, and whose understanding is dissipated by levity. In his idle hours he is rather loose than wicked; and when the occasion forces out his latent qualities, he is great without effort, and brave without tumult. The trifler is roused into a hero, and the hero again reposes in the trifler. This character is great, original and just.

Percy is a rugged soldier, cholerick and quarrelsome, and has only the soldier's virtues, generosity and courage.

But Falstaff, unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee! thou compound of sense and vice; of sense which may be admired, but not esteemed; of vice which may be despised, but hardly detested. Falstaff is a character loaded with faults, and with those faults which naturally produce contempt. He is a thief and a glutton, a coward and a

boaster, always ready to cheat the weak, and prey upon the poor; to terrify the timorous, and insult the defenceless. At once obsequious and malignant, he satirizes in their absence those whom he lives by flattering. He is familiar with the prince only as an agent of vice, but of this familiarity he is so proud, as not only to be supercilious and haughty with common men, but to think his interest of importance to the duke of Lancaster. Yet the man thus corrupt, thus despicable, makes himself necessary to the prince that despises him, by the most pleasing of all qualities, perpetual gaiety, by an unfailing power of exciting laughter, which is the more freely indulged, as his wit is not of the splendid or ambitious kind, but consists in easy scapes and sallies of levity, which make sport, but raise no envy. It must be observed, that he is stained with no enormous or sanguinary crimes, so that his licentiousness is not so offensive but that it may be borne for his mirth.

The moral to be drawn from this representation is, that no man is more dangerous than he that, with a will to corrupt, hath the power to please; and that neither wit nor honesty ought to think themselves safe with such a companion, when they see Henry seduced by Falstaff.

KING HENRY V

This play has many scenes of high dignity, and many of easy merriment. The character of the king is well supported, except in his courtship, where he has neither the vivacity of Hal, nor the grandeur of

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Henry. The humour of Pistol is very happily continued; his character has, perhaps, been the model of all the bullies that have yet appeared on the English stage.

The lines given to the chorus have many admirers; but the truth is, that in them a little may be praised, and much must be forgiven: nor can it be easily discovered why the intelligence given by the chorus is more necessary in this play than in many others where it is omitted. The great defect of this play is the emptiness and narrowness of the last act, which very little diligence might have easily avoided.

KING HENRY VI. PART I

Of this play there is no copy earlier than that of the folio in 1623, though the two succeeding parts are extant in two editions in quarto. That the second and third parts were published without the first, may be admitted, as no weak proof that the copies were surreptitiously obtained, and that the printers of that time gave the publick those plays, not such as the author designed, but such as they could get them. That this play was written before the two others is indubitably collected from the series of events; that it was written and played before Henry V. is apparent, because in the epilogue there is mention made of this play, and not of the other parts:

> Henry the sixth in swaddling bands crown'd king,
> Whose state so many had i' the managing
> That they lost France, and made all England rue,
> Which oft our stage hath shown.

France is lost in this play. The two following contain, as the old title imports, the contention of the houses of York and Lancaster.

The two first parts of Henry VI. were printed in 1600. When Henry V. was written, we know not, but it was printed likewise in 1600, and, therefore, before the publication of the first and second parts: the first part of Henry VI. had been often shown on the stage, and would certainly have appeared in its place had the author been the publisher.

KING HENRY VI. PART III

The three parts of Henry VI. are suspected, by Mr. Theobald, of being supposititious, and are declared, by Dr. Warburton, to be certainly not Shakespeare's[w]. Mr. Theobald's suspicion arises from some obsolete words; but the phraseology is like the rest of our author's style, and single words, of which, however, I do not observe more than two, can conclude little.

Dr. Warburton gives no reason, but I suppose him to judge upon deeper principles and more comprehensive views, and to draw his opinion from the general effect and spirit of the composition, which he thinks inferiour to the other historical plays.

From mere inferiority nothing can be inferred; in the productions of wit there will be inequality.

[w] For a full discussion of this point, see the Dissertation on the three parts of King Henry VI. tending to show that those plays were not written originally by Shakespeare. The dissertation was written by Malone, and pronounced by Porson to be one of the most convincing pieces of criticism he had ever met with. Malone's Shakespeare, xviii. 557.

Sometimes judgment will err, and sometimes the matter itself will defeat the artist. Of every author's works one will be the best, and one will be the worst. The colours are not equally pleasing, nor the attitudes equally graceful, in all the pictures of Titian or Reynolds.

Dissimilitude of style, and heterogeneousness of sentiment, may sufficiently show that a work does not really belong to the reputed author. But in these plays no such marks of spuriousness are found. The diction, the versification, and the figures, are Shakespeare's. These plays, considered, without regard to characters and incidents, merely as narratives in verse, are more happily conceived, and more accurately finished, than those of King John, Richard II. or the tragick scenes of Henry IV. and V. If we take these plays from Shakespeare, to whom shall they be given? What author of that age had the same easiness of expression and fluency of numbers?

Having considered the evidence given by the plays themselves, and found it in their favour, let us now inquire what corroboration can be gained from other testimony. They are ascribed to Shakespeare by the first editors, whose attestation may be received in questions of fact, however unskilfully they superintended their edition. They seem to be declared genuine by the voice of Shakespeare himself, who refers to the second play in his epilogue to Henry V. and apparently connects the first act of Richard III. with the last of the third part of

Henry VI. If it be objected that the plays were popular, and that, therefore, he alluded to them as well known; it may be answered, with equal probability, that the natural passions of a poet would have disposed him to separate his own works from those of an inferiour hand. And, indeed, if an author's own testimony is to be overthrown by speculative criticism, no man can be any longer secure of literary reputation.

Of these three plays I think the second the best. The truth is, that they have not sufficient variety of action, for the incidents are too often of the same kind; yet many of the characters are well discriminated. King Henry and his queen, king Edward, the duke of Gloucester, and the earl of Warwick, are very strongly and distinctly painted.

The old copies of the two latter parts of Henry VI. and of Henry V. are so apparently imperfect and mutilated, that there is no reason for supposing them the first draughts of Shakespeare. I am inclined to believe them copies taken by some auditor who wrote down, during the representation, what the time would permit, then, perhaps, filled up some of his omissions at a second or third hearing, and when he had by his method formed something like a play, sent it to the printer[x].

KING RICHARD III

This is one of the most celebrated of our author's performances; yet I know not whether it has not

[x] See this opinion controverted. Malone's Shakespeare, xviii. 550.—Ed.

happened to him as to others, to be praised most, when praise is not most deserved. That this play has scenes noble in themselves, and very well contrived to strike in the exhibition, cannot be denied. But some parts are trifling, others shocking, and some improbable.

I have nothing to add to the observations of the learned criticks, but that some traces of this antiquated exhibition are still retained in the rustick puppet-plays, in which I have seen the Devil very lustily belaboured by Punch, whom I hold to be the legitimate successor of the old Vice[y].

KING HENRY VIII

The play of Henry VIII. is one of those which still keeps possession of the stage by the splendour of its pageantry. The coronation, about forty years ago, drew the people together in multitudes for a great part of the winter[z]. Yet pomp is not the only merit of this play. The meek sorrow and virtuous distress of Catharine have furnished some scenes which may be justly numbered among the greatest efforts of tragedy. But the genius of Shakespeare comes in and goes out with Catharine[a]. Every other part may be easily conceived, and easily written.

[y] This paragraph, apparently so unconnected with the preceding, refers to some critical dissertations on the character of Vice. They may be found in Malone's Shakespeare, xix. 244. See likewise Pursuits of Literature, Dialogue the First.— Ed.

[z] Chetwood says, that during one season it was exhibited 75 times. See his History of the Stage, p. 68.— Ed.

[a] Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Siddons that he admired her most in this character.— Mrs. Piozzi.

The historical dramas are now concluded, of which the two parts of Henry IV. and Henry V. are among the happiest of our author's compositions; and King John, Richard III. and Henry VIII. deservedly stand in the second class. Those whose curiosity would refer the historical scenes to their original, may consult Holinshed, and sometimes Hall: from Holinshed, Shakespeare has often inserted whole speeches, with no more alteration than was necessary to the numbers of his verse. To transcribe them into the margin was unnecessary, because the original is easily examined, and they are seldom less perspicuous in the poet than in the historian.

To play histories, or to exhibit a succession of events by action and dialogue, was a common entertainment among our rude ancestors upon great festivities. The parish clerks once performed at Clerkenwell a play, which lasted three days, containing the History of the world.

CORIOLANUS

The tragedy of Coriolanus is one of the most amusing of our author's performances. The old man's merriment in Menenius; the lofty lady's dignity in Volumnia; the bridal modesty in Virgilia; the patrician and military haughtiness in Coriolanus; the plebeian malignity, and tribunitian insolence in Brutus and Sicinius, make a very pleasing and interesting variety: and the various revolutions of the hero's fortune fill the mind with anxious curiosity.

There is, perhaps, too much bustle in the first act, and too little in the last.

JULIUS CÆSAR

Of this tragedy many particular passages deserve regard, and the contention and reconcilement of Brutus and Cassius is universally celebrated; but I have never been strongly agitated in perusing it, and think it somewhat cold and unaffecting, compared with some other of Shakespeare's plays; his adherence to the real story, and to Roman manners, seems to have impeded the natural vigour of his genius.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

This play keeps curiosity always busy, and the passions always interested. The continual hurry of the action, the variety of incidents, and the quick succession of one personage to another, call the mind forward, without intermission, from the first act to the last. But the power of delighting is derived principally from the frequent changes of the scene; for, except the feminine arts, some of which are too low, which distinguish Cleopatra, no character is very strongly discriminated. Upton, who did not easily miss what he desired to find, has discovered that the language of Antony is, with great skill and learning, made pompous and superb, according to his real practice. But I think his diction not distinguishable from that of others: the most tumid speech in the play is that which Cæsar makes to Octavia.

The events, of which the principal are described

according to history, are produced without any art of connexion or care of disposition.

TIMON OF ATHENS

The play of Timon is a domestick tragedy, and, therefore, strongly fastens on the attention of the reader. In the plan there is not much art, but the incidents are natural, and the characters various and exact. The catastrophe affords a very powerful warning against that ostentatious liberality, which scatters bounty, but confers no benefits, and buys flattery, but not friendship.

In this tragedy are many passages perplexed, obscure, and probably corrupt, which I have endeavoured to rectify or explain, with due diligence; but having only one copy, cannot promise myself that my endeavours will be much applauded.

TITUS ANDRONICUS

All the editors and criticks agree with Mr. Theobald in supposing this play spurious. I see no reason for differing from them; for the colour of the style is wholly different from that of the other plays, and there is an attempt at regular versification and artificial closes, not always inelegant, yet seldom pleasing. The barbarity of the spectacles, and the general massacre, which are here exhibited, can scarcely be conceived tolerable to any audience; yet we are told by Jonson, that they were not only borne, but praised. That Shakespeare wrote any part, though

Theobald declares it incontestable, I see no reason for believing.

The testimony produced at the beginning of this play, by which it is ascribed to Shakespeare, is by no means equal to the argument against its authenticity, arising from the total difference of conduct, language and sentiments, by which it stands apart from all the rest. Meres had probably no other evidence than that of a title-page, which, though in our time it be sufficient, was then of no great authority; for all the plays which were rejected by the first collectors of Shakespeare's works, and admitted in later editions, and again rejected by the critical editors, had Shakespeare's name on the title[b], as we must suppose, by the fraudulence of the printers, who, while there were yet no gazettes, nor advertisements, nor any means of circulating literary intelligence, could usurp at pleasure any celebrated name. Nor had Shakespeare any interest in detecting the imposture, as none of his fame or profit was produced by the press.

The chronology of this play does not prove it not to be Shakespeare's. If it had been written twenty-five years in 1614, it might have been written when Shakespeare was twenty-five years old. When he left Warwickshire I know not; but at the age of twenty-five it was rather too late to fly for deer-stealing.

[b] This statement is not quite accurate concerning the seven spurious plays, which the printer of the folio in 1664 improperly admitted into his volume. The name of Shakespeare appears only in the title-pages of four of them: Pericles, Sir John Oldcastle, the London Prodigal, and the Yorkshire Tragedy. Malone's Shak. xxi. 382.

Ravenscroft, who in the reign of Charles II. revised this play, and restored it to the stage, tells us, in his preface, from a theatrical tradition, I suppose, which in his time might be of sufficient authority, that this play was touched, in different parts, by Shakespeare, but written by some other poet. I do not find Shakespeare's touches very discernible.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

This play is more correctly written than most of Shakespeare's compositions, but it is not one of those in which either the extent of his views or elevation of his fancy is fully displayed. As the story abounded with materials, he has exerted little invention; but he has diversified his characters with great variety, and preserved them with great exactness. His vicious characters sometimes disgust, but cannot corrupt, for both Cressida and Pandarus are detested and contemned. The comick characters seem to have been the favourites of the writer; they are of the superficial kind, and exhibit more of manners than nature; but they are copiously filled, and powerfully impressed.

Shakespeare has in his story followed, for the greater part, the old book of Caxton, which was then very popular; but the character of Thersites, of which it makes no mention, is a proof that this play was written after Chapman had published his version of Homer[c].

The first seven books of Chapman's Homer were published in the year 1596, and again in 1598. The whole twenty-four of the Iliad appeared in 1611.— STEEVENS.

CYMBELINE

This play has many just sentiments, some natural dialogues, and some pleasing scenes, but they are obtained at the expense of much incongruity. To remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the names and manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation.

KING LEAR

The tragedy of Lear is deservedly celebrated among the dramas of Shakespeare. There is, perhaps, no play which keeps the attention so strongly fixed; which so much agitates our passions, and interests our curiosity. The artful involutions of distinct interests, the striking oppositions of contrary characters, the sudden changes of fortune, and the quick succession of events, fill the mind with a perpetual tumult of indignation, pity and hope. There is no scene which does not contribute to the aggravation of the distress or conduct of the action, and scarce a line which does not conduce to the progress of the scene. So powerful is the current of the poet's imagination, that the mind, which once ventures within it, is hurried irresistibly along.

On the seeming improbability of Lear's conduct, it may be observed, that he is represented according to histories at that time vulgarly received as true. And, perhaps, if we turn our thoughts upon the

barbarity and ignorance of the age to which this story is referred, it will appear not so unlikely as while we estimate Lear's manners by our own. Such preference of one daughter to another, or resignation of dominion on such conditions, would be yet credible, if told of a petty prince of Guinea or Madagascar. Shakespeare, indeed, by the mention of his earls and dukes, has given us the idea of times more civilized, and of life regulated by softer manners; and the truth is, that though he so nicely discriminates, and so minutely describes the characters of men, he commonly neglects and confounds the characters of ages, by mingling customs ancient and modern, English and foreign.

My learned friend Mr. Warton, who has, in the Adventurer, very minutely criticised this play, remarks, that the instances of cruelty are too savage and shocking, and that the intervention of Edmund destroys the simplicity of the story. These objections may, I think, be answered, by repeating, that the cruelty of the daughters is an historical fact, to which the poet has added little, having only drawn it into a series by dialogue and action. But I am not able to apologize with equal plausibility for the extrusion of Gloster's eyes, which seems an act too horrid to be endured in dramatick exhibition, and such as must always compel the mind to relieve its distress by incredulity. Yet let it be remembered that our author well knew what would please the audience for which he wrote.

The injury done by Edmund to the simplicity of the action is abundantly recompensed by the addition of variety, by the art with which he is made to co-operate with the chief design, and the opportunity which he gives the poet of combining perfidy with perfidy, and connecting the wicked son with the wicked daughters, to impress this important moral, that villany is never at a stop, that crimes lead to crimes, and at last terminate in ruin.

But though this moral be incidentally enforced, Shakespeare has suffered the virtue of Cordelia to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural ideas of justice, to the hope of the reader, and, what is yet more strange, to the faith of chronicles. Yet this conduct is justified by the Spectator, who blames Tate for giving Cordelia success and happiness in his alteration, and declares, that, in his opinion, "the tragedy has lost half its beauty." Dennis has remarked, whether justly or not, that, to secure the favourable reception of Cato, "the town was poisoned with much false and abominable criticism," and that endeavours had been used to discredit and decry poetical justice. A play in which the wicked prosper, and the virtuous miscarry, may doubtless be good, because it is a just representation of the common events of human life: but since all reasonable beings naturally love justice, I cannot easily be persuaded, that the observation of justice makes a play worse; or that, if other excellencies are equal, the audience will not always rise better pleased from the final triumph of persecuted virtue.

In the present case the publick has decided[d]. Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor.

There is another controversy among the criticks concerning this play. It is disputed whether the predominant image in Lear's disordered mind be the loss of his kingdom or the cruelty of his daughters. Mr. Murphy, a very judicious critick, has evinced by induction of particular passages, that the cruelty of his daughters is the primary source of his distress, and that the loss of royalty affects him only as a secondary and subordinate evil. He observes, with great justness, that Lear would move our compassion but little, did we not rather consider the injured father than the degraded king.

The story of this play, except the episode of Edmund, which is derived, I think, from Sidney, is taken originally from Geoffry of Monmouth, whom Holinshed generally copied; but, perhaps, immediately from an old historical ballad. My reason for believing that the play was posterior to the ballad, rather than the ballad to the play, is, that the bal-

[d] Dr. Johnson should rather have said that the managers of the theatres-royal have decided, and that the public has been obliged to acquiesce in their decision. The altered play has the upper gallery on its side; the original drama was patronized by Addison:

Victrix causa *Diis* placuit, sed victa *Catoni*. LUCAN.

Malone's Shak. x. 290.

lad has nothing of Shakespeare's nocturnal tempest, which is too striking to have been omitted, and that it follows the chronicle; it has the rudiments of the play, but none of its amplifications: it first hinted Lear's madness, but did not array it in circumstances. The writer of the ballad added something to the history, which is a proof that he would have added more, if more had occurred to his mind, and more must have occurred if he had seen Shakespeare.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

This play is one of the most pleasing of our author's performances. The scenes are busy and various, the incidents numerous and important, the catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the action carried on with such probability, at least with such congruity to popular opinions, as tragedy requires.

Here is one of the few attempts of Shakespeare to exhibit the conversation of gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Mr. Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakespeare, that "he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third act, lest he should have been killed by him." Yet he thinks him "no such formidable person, but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed," without danger to the poet. Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, that, in a pointed sentence, more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very sel-

dom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakespeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are, perhaps, out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive and sublime.

The nurse is one of the characters in which the author delighted; he has, with great subtilty of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, trusty and dishonest.

His comick scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetick strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravations. His persons, however distressed, have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit.

HAMLET

If the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterized, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment, that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity, not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time

in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that, in the first act, chills the blood with horrour, to the fop, in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is, perhaps, not wholly secure against objections. The action is, indeed, for the most part, in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause[e], for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily have been formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

[e] See, however, Mr. Boswell's long and erudite note in his Shakespeare, vii. 536. "Il me semble," says Madame De Staël, "qu'en lisant cette tragédie, on distingue parfaitement dans Hamlet l'égarement réel à travers l'égarement affecté."—M^me^. De Staël de la Littérature, c. xiii. See also Schlegel in his Dramatic Literature. ii.— Ed.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect to poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification, which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious.

OTHELLO

The beauties of this play impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnaminous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakespeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will, perhaps, not be said of him as he says of himself, that he is

"a man not easily jealous," yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him "perplexed in the extreme."

There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is, from the first scene to the last, hated and despised.

Even the inferiour characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which, by persuasion, he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Æmilia is such as we often find, worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villanies.

The scenes, from the beginning to the end, are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the narrative, in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HARLEIAN LIBRARY

TO solicit a subscription for a catalogue of books exposed to sale, is an attempt for which some apology cannot but be necessary; for few would willingly contribute to the expense of volumes, by which neither instruction nor entertainment could be afforded, from which only the bookseller could expect advantage, and of which the only use must cease, at the dispersion of the library[f].

Nor could the reasonableness of an universal rejection of our proposal be denied, if this catalogue were to be compiled with no other view, than that of promoting the sale of the books which it enumerates, and drawn up with that inaccuracy and confusion which may be found in those that are daily published.

But our design, like our proposal, is uncommon, and to be prosecuted at a very uncommon expense: it being intended, that the books shall be distributed into their distinct classes, and every class ranged with some regard to the age of the writers; that every book shall be accurately described; that the peculiarities of editions shall be remarked, and observations from the authors of literary history occasionally interspersed; that, by this catalogue, we may inform posterity of the excellence and value of this great collection, and promote the knowledge

[f] This apology is no longer necessary, when the catalogue of Lord Spencer's library is published at 16*l.* 16*s.* See Dibdin's Bibliomania, Ædes Althorpianæ, and the indignant complaints of the author of the Pursuits of Literature.— Ed.

of scarce books, and elegant editions. For this purpose, men of letters are engaged, who cannot even be supplied with amanuenses, but at an expense above that of a common catalogue.

To show that this collection deserves a particular degree of regard from the learned and the studious, that it excels any library that was ever yet offered to publick sale, in the value, as well as number, of the volumes, which it contains; and that, therefore, this catalogue will not be of less use to men of letters, than those of the Thuanian, Heinsian, or Barberinian libraries, it may not be improper to exhibit a general account of the different classes, as they are naturally divided by the several sciences.

By this method we can, indeed, exhibit only a general idea, at once magnificent and confused; an idea of the writings of many nations, collected from distant parts of the world, discovered sometimes by chance, and sometimes by curiosity, amidst the rubbish of forsaken monasteries, and the repositories of ancient families, and brought hither from every part, as to the universal receptacle of learning.

It will be no unpleasing effect of this account, if those that shall happen to peruse it, should be inclined by it to reflect on the character of the late proprietors, and to pay some tribute of veneration to their ardour for literature, to that generous and exalted curiosity which they gratified with incessant searches and immense expense, and to which they dedicated that time, and that superfluity of fortune, which many others of their rank employ in

the pursuit of contemptible amusements, or the gratification of guilty passions. And, surely, every man, who considers learning as ornamental and advantageous to the community, must allow them the honour of publick benefactors, who have introduced amongst us authors, not hitherto well known, and added to the literary treasures of their native country.

That our catalogue will excite any other man to emulate the collectors of this library, to prefer books and manuscripts to equipage and luxury, and to forsake noise and diversion for the conversation of the learned, and the satisfaction of extensive knowledge, we are very far from presuming to hope; but shall make no scruple to assert, that, if any man should happen to be seized with such laudable ambition, he may find in this catalogue hints and informations which are not easily to be met with; he will discover, that the boasted Bodleian library is very far from a perfect model, and that even the learned Fabricius cannot completely instruct him in the early editions of the classick writers.

But the collectors of libraries cannot be numerous; and, therefore, catalogues could not very properly be recommended to the publick, if they had not a more general and frequent use, an use which every student has experienced, or neglected to his loss. By the means of catalogues only, can it be known what has been written on every part of learning, and the hazard avoided of encountering difficulties which have already been cleared, dis-

cussing questions which have already been decided, and digging in mines of literature which former ages have exhausted.

How often this has been the fate of students, every man of letters can declare; and, perhaps, there are very few who have not sometimes valued as new discoveries, made by themselves, those observations, which have long since been published, and of which the world, therefore, will refuse them the praise; nor can the refusal be censured as any enormous violation of justice; for, why should they not forfeit by their ignorance, what they might claim by their sagacity?

To illustrate this remark, by the mention of obscure names, would not much confirm it; and to vilify, for this purpose, the memory of men truly great, would be to deny them the reverence which they may justly claim from those whom their writings have instructed. May the shade, at least, of one great English critick[g] rest without disturbance; and may no man presume to insult his memory, who wants his learning, his reason, or his wit.

From the vexatious disappointment of meeting reproach, where praise is expected, every man will certainly desire to be secured; and, therefore, that book will have some claim to his regard, from which he may receive informations of the labours of his

[g] It is not quite clear to whom Johnson here alludes; perhaps to Bentley, and with reference to some of Garth's expressions:

> So diamonds take a lustre from their foil;
> And to a Bentley 'tis we owe a Boyle.
>
> Dispensary, Canto V.

predecessors, such as a catalogue of the Harleian library will copiously afford him.

Nor is the use of catalogues of less importance to those whom curiosity has engaged in the study of literary history, and who think the intellectual revolutions of the world more worthy of their attention, than the ravages of tyrants, the desolation of kingdoms, the rout of armies, and the fall of empires. Those who are pleased with observing the first birth of new opinions, their struggles against opposition, their silent progress under persecution, their general reception, and their gradual decline, or sudden extinction; those that amuse themselves with remarking the different periods of human knowledge, and observe how darkness and light succeed each other; by what accident the most gloomy nights of ignorance have given way to the dawn of science; and how learning has languished and decayed, for want of patronage and regard, or been overborne by the prevalence of fashionable ignorance, or lost amidst the tumults of invasion, and the storms of violence. All those who desire any knowledge of the literary transactions of past ages, may find in catalogues, like this at least, such an account as is given by annalists, and chronologers of civil history.

How the knowledge of the sacred writings has been diffused, will be observed from the catalogue of the various editions of the Bible, from the first impression by Faust, in 1462, to the present time; in which will be contained the polyglot editions of Spain, France, and England, those of the original

Hebrew, the Greek Septuagint, and the Latin Vulgate; with the versions which are now used in the remotest parts of Europe, in the country of the Grisons, in Lithuania, Bohemia, Finland, and Iceland.

With regard to the attempts of the same kind made in our own country, there are few whose expectations will not be exceeded by the number of English Bibles, of which not one is forgotten, whether valuable for the pomp and beauty of the impression, or for the notes with which the text is accompanied, or for any controversy or persecution that it produced, or for the peculiarity of any single passage. With the same care have the various editions of the book of Common Prayer been selected, from which all the alterations which have been made in it may be easily remarked.

Amongst a great number of Roman missals and breviaries, remarkable for the beauty of their cuts and illuminations, will be found the Mosarabick missal and breviary, that raised such commotions in the kingdom of Spain.

The controversial treatises written in England, about the time of the Reformation, have been diligently collected, with a multitude of remarkable tracts, single sermons, and small treatises; which, however worthy to be preserved, are, perhaps, to be found in no other place.

The regard which was always paid, by the collectors of this library, to that remarkable period of time, in which the art of printing was invented, determined them to accumulate the ancient impres-

sions of the fathers of the church; to which the later editions are added, lest antiquity should have seemed more worthy of esteem than accuracy.

History has been considered with the regard due to that study by which the manners are most easily formed, and from which the most efficacious instruction is received; nor will the most extensive curiosity fail of gratification in this library, from which no writers have been excluded, that relate either the religious, or civil affairs of any nation.

Not only those authors of ecclesiastical history have been procured, that treat of the state of religion in general, or deliver accounts of sects or nations, but those, likewise, who have confined themselves to particular orders of men in every church; who have related the original, and the rules of every society, or recounted the lives of its founder and its members; those who have deduced in every country the succession of bishops, and those who have employed their abilities in celebrating the piety of particular saints, or martyrs, or monks, or nuns.

The civil history of all nations has been amassed together; nor is it easy to determine which has been thought most worthy of curiosity.

Of France, not only the general histories and ancient chronicles, the accounts of celebrated reigns, and narratives of remarkable events, but even the memorials of single families, the lives of private men, the antiquities of particular cities, churches, and monasteries, the topography of provinces, and

the accounts of laws, customs, and prescriptions, are here to be found.

The several states of Italy have, in this treasury, their particular historians, whose accounts are, perhaps, generally more exact, by being less extensive; and more interesting, by being more particular.

Nor has less regard been paid to the different nations of the Germanick empire, of which neither the Bohemians, nor Hungarians, nor Austrians, nor Bavarians, have been neglected; nor have their antiquities, however generally disregarded, been less studiously searched, than their present state.

The northern nations have supplied this collection, not only with history, but poetry, with Gothick antiquities and Runick inscriptions; which, at least, have this claim to veneration, above the remains of the Roman magnificence, that they are the works of those heroes by whom the Roman empire was destroyed; and which may plead, at least in this nation, that they ought not to be neglected by those that owe to the men whose memories they preserve, their constitution, their properties, and their liberties.

The curiosity of these collectors extended equally to all parts of the world; nor did they forget to add to the northern the southern writers, or to adorn their collection with chronicles of Spain, and the conquest of Mexico.

Even of those nations with which we have less intercourse, whose customs are less accurately known, and whose history is less distinctly recounted, there are in this library reposited such accounts as the

Europeans have been hitherto able to obtain; nor are the Mogul, the Tartar, the Turk, and the Saracen, without their historians.

That persons, so inquisitive with regard to the transactions of other nations, should inquire yet more ardently after the history of their own, may be naturally expected; and, indeed, this part of the library is no common instance of diligence and accuracy. Here are to be found, with the ancient chronicles, and larger histories of Britain, the narratives of single reigns, and the accounts of remarkable revolutions, the topographical histories of countries, the pedigrees of families, the antiquities of churches and cities, the proceedings of parliaments, the records of monasteries, and the lives of particular men, whether eminent in the church or the state, or remarkable in private life; whether exemplary for their virtues, or detestable for their crimes; whether persecuted for religion, or executed for rebellion.

That memorable period of the English history, which begins with the reign of king Charles the first, and ends with the Restoration, will almost furnish a library alone; such is the number of volumes, pamphlets and papers, which were published by either party; and such is the care with which they have been preserved.

Nor is history without the necessary preparatives and attendants, geography and chronology: of geography, the best writers and delineators have been procured, and pomp and accuracy have been both regarded; the student of chronology may here find,

likewise, those authors who searched the records of time, and fixed the periods of history.

With the historians and geographers may be ranked the writers of voyages and travels, which may be read here in the Latin, English, Dutch, German, French, Italian, and Spanish languages.

The laws of different countries, as they are in themselves equally worthy of curiosity with their history, have, in this collection, been justly regarded; and the rules by which the various communities of the world are governed, may be here examined and compared. Here are the ancient editions of the papal decretals, and the commentators of the civil law, the edicts of Spain, and the statutes of Venice.

But with particular industry have the various writers on the laws of our own country been collected, from the most ancient to the present time, from the bodies of the statutes to the minutest treatise; not only the reports, precedents, and readings of our own courts, but even the laws of our West-Indian colonies, will be exhibited in our catalogue.

But neither history nor law have been so far able to engross this library, as to exclude physick, philosophy, or criticism. Those have been thought, with justice, worthy of a place, who have examined the different species of animals, delineated their forms, or described their properties and instincts; or who have penetrated the bowels of the earth, treated on its different strata, and analyzed its metals; or who have amused themselves with less

JOHN KEMPLE

LIBRARY
STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
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laborious speculations, and planted trees, or cultivated flowers.

Those that have exalted their thoughts above the minuter parts of the creation, who have observed the motions of the heavenly bodies, and attempted systems of the universe, have not been denied the honour which they deserved by so great an attempt, whatever has been their success. Nor have those mathematicians been rejected, who have applied their science to the common purposes of life; or those that have deviated into the kindred arts of tacticks, architecture, and fortification.

Even arts of far less importance have found their authors, nor have these authors been despised by the boundless curiosity of the proprietors of the Harleian library. The writers on horsemanship and fencing are more numerous and more bulky than could be expected by those who reflect, how seldom those excel in either, whom their education has qualified to compose books.

The admirer of Greek and Roman literature will meet, in this collection, with editions little known to the most inquisitive criticks, and which have escaped the observation of those whose great employment has been the collation of copies; nor will he find only the most ancient editions of Faustus, Jenson, Spira, Sweynheim and Pannartz, but the most accurate, likewise, and beautiful of Colinæus, the Juntæ, Plantin, Aldus, the Stephens, and Elzevir, with the commentaries and observations of the most learned editors.

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Nor are they accompanied only with the illustrations of those who have confined their attempts to particular writers, but of those, likewise, who have treated on any part of the Greek or Roman antiquities, their laws, their customs, their dress, their buildings, their wars, their revenues, or the rites and ceremonies of their worship, and those that have endeavoured to explain any of their authors from their statues or their coins.

Next to the ancients, those writers deserve to be mentioned, who, at the restoration of literature, imitated their language and their style with so great success, or who laboured with so much industry to make them understood: such were Philelphus and Politian, Scaliger aad Buchanan, and the poets of the age of Leo the tenth; these are, likewise, to be found in this library, together with the deliciæ, or collections of all nations.

Painting is so nearly allied to poetry, that it cannot be wondered that those who have so much esteemed the one, have paid an equal regard to the other; and, therefore, it may be easily imagined, that the collection of prints is numerous in an uncommon degree; but, surely, the expectation of every man will be exceeded, when he is informed that there are more than forty thousand engraven from Raphael, Titian, Guido, the Carraccis, and a thousand others, by Nanteuil, Hollar, Callet, Edelinck, and Dorigny, and other engravers of equal reputation.

There is also a great collection of original draw-

ings, of which three seem to deserve a particular mention: the first exhibits a representation of the inside of St. Peter's church at Rome; the second, of that of St. John Lateran; and the third, of the high altar of St. Ignatius; all painted with the utmost accuracy, in their proper colours.

As the value of this great collection may be conceived from this account, however imperfect; as the variety of subjects must engage the curiosity of men of different studies, inclinations, and employments, it may be thought of very little use to mention any slighter advantages, or to dwell on the decorations and embellishments which the generosity of the proprietors has bestowed upon it; yet, since the compiler of the Thuanian catalogue thought not even that species of elegance below his observation, it may not be improper to observe, that the Harleian library, perhaps, excels all others, not more in the number and excellence, than in the splendour of its volumes[h].

We may now, surely, be allowed to hope, that our catalogue will not be thought unworthy of the publick curiosity; that it will be purchased as a record of this great collection, and preserved as one of the memorials of learning.

The patrons of literature will forgive the purchaser of this library, if he presumes to assert some claim to their protection and encouragement, as he may have been instrumental in continuing to this

[h] Mr. Dibdin informs us, that Lord Oxford gave 18,000*l.* for the *binding* only the least part of the Harleian Library. See his Bibliomania.— Ed.

nation the advantage of it. The sale of Vossius's collection into a foreign country, is, to this day, regretted by men of letters; and if this effort for the prevention of another loss of the same kind should be disadvantageous to him, no man will hereafter willingly risk his fortune in the cause of learning.

ORIGIN AND IMPORTANCE OF SMALL TRACTS AND FUGITIVE PIECES

ESSAY WRITTEN FOR THE INTRODUCTION TO THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY

THOUGH the scheme of the following miscellany is so obvious, that the title alone is sufficient to explain it; and though several collections have been formerly attempted, upon plans, as to the method, very little, but, as to the capacity and execution, very different from ours; we, being possessed of the greatest variety for such a work, hope for a more general reception than those confined schemes had the fortune to meet with; and, therefore, think it not wholly unnecessary to explain our intentions, to display the treasure of materials out of which this miscellany is to be compiled, and to exhibit a general idea of the pieces which we intend to insert in it.

There is, perhaps, no nation in which it is so necessary, as in our own, to assemble, from time to time, the small tracts and fugitive pieces, which are occasionally published; for, besides the general subjects of inquiry, which are cultivated by us, in common with every other learned nation, our constitution in church and state naturally gives birth to a multitude of performances, which would either not have been written, or could not have been made publick in any other place.

The form of our government, which gives every man, that has leisure, or curiosity, or vanity, the right of inquiring into the propriety of publick measures,

and, by consequence, obliges those who are intrusted with the administration of national affairs, to give an account of their conduct to almost every man who demands it, may be reasonably imagined to have occasioned innumerable pamphlets, which would never have appeared under arbitrary governments, where every man lulls himself in indolence under calamities, of which he cannot promote the redress, or thinks it prudent to conceal the uneasiness, of which he cannot complain without danger.

The multiplicity of religious sects tolerated among us, of which every one has found opponents and vindicators, is another source of unexhaustible publication, almost peculiar to ourselves; for controversies cannot be long continued, nor frequently revived, where an inquisitor has a right to shut up the disputants in dungeons; or where silence can be imposed on either party, by the refusal of a license.

Not, that it should be inferred from hence, that political or religious controversies are the only products of the liberty of the British press; the mind once let loose to inquiry, and suffered to operate without restraint, necessarily deviates into peculiar opinions, and wanders in new tracks, where she is, indeed, sometimes lost in a labyrinth, from which though she cannot return, and scarce knows how to proceed; yet, sometimes, makes useful discoveries, or finds out nearer paths to knowledge.

The boundless liberty with which every man may write his own thoughts, and the opportunity of conveying new sentiments to the publick, without danger

of suffering either ridicule or censure, which every man may enjoy, whose vanity does not incite him too hastily to own his performances, naturally invites those who employ themselves in speculation, to try how their notions will be received by a nation, which exempts caution from fear, and modesty from shame; and it is no wonder, that where reputation may be gained, but needs not be lost, multitudes are willing to try their fortune, and thrust their opinions into the light; sometimes with unsuccessful haste, and sometimes with happy temerity.

It is observed, that among the natives of England, is to be found a greater variety of humour, than in any other country; and, doubtless, where every man has a full liberty to propagate his conceptions, variety of humour must produce variety of writers; and, where the number of authors is so great, there cannot but be some worthy of distinction.

All these, and many other causes, too tedious to be enumerated, have contributed to make pamphlets and small tracts a very important part of an English library; nor are there any pieces, upon which those, who aspire to the reputation of judicious collectors of books, bestow more attention, or greater expense; because many advantages may be expected from the perusal of these small productions, which are scarcely to be found in that of larger works.

If we regard history, it is well known, that most political treatises have for a long time appeared in this form, and that the first relations of transactions, while they are yet the subject of conversation, di-

vide the opinions, and employ the conjectures of mankind, are delivered by these petty writers, who have opportunities of collecting the different sentiments of disputants, of inquiring the truth from living witnesses, and of copying their representations from the life; and, therefore, they preserve a multitude of particular incidents, which are forgotten in a short time, or omitted in formal relations, and which are yet to be considered as sparks of truth, which, when united, may afford light in some of the darkest scenes of state, as, we doubt not, will be sufficiently proved in the course of this miscellany; and which it is, therefore, the interest of the publick to preserve unextinguished.

The same observation may be extended to subjects of yet more importance. In controversies that relate to the truths of religion, the first essays of reformation are generally timorous; and those, who have opinions to offer, which they expect to be opposed, produce their sentiments, by degrees, and, for the most part, in small tracts: by degrees, that they may not shock their readers with too many novelties at once; and in small tracts, that they may be easily dispersed, or privately printed. Almost every controversy, therefore, has been, for a time, carried on in pamphlets, nor has swelled into larger volumes, till the first ardour of the disputants has subsided, and they have recollected their notions with coolness enough to digest them into order, consolidate them into systems, and fortify them with authorities.

From pamphlets, consequently, are to be learned

the progress of every debate; the various state to which the questions have been changed; the artifices and fallacies which have been used, and the subterfuges by which reason has been eluded. In such writings may be seen how the mind has been opened by degrees, how one truth has led to another, how errour has been disentangled, and hints improved to demonstration, which pleasure, and many others, are lost by him that only reads the larger writers, by whom these scattered sentiments are collected, who will see none of the changes of fortune which every opinion has passed through, will have no opportunity of remarking the transient advantages which errour may sometimes obtain, by the artifices of its patron, or the successful rallies, by which truth regains the day, after a repulse; but will be to him, who traces the dispute through into particular gradations, as he that hears of a victory, to him that sees the battle.

Since the advantages of preserving these small tracts are so numerous, our attempt to unite them in volumes cannot be thought either useless or unseasonable; for there is no other method of securing them from accidents; and they have already been so long neglected, that this design cannot be delayed, without hazarding the loss of many pieces, which deserve to be transmitted to another age.

The practice of publishing pamphlets on the most important subjects has now prevailed more than two centuries among us; and, therefore, it cannot be doubted, but that, as no large collections have been

yet made, many curious tracts must have perished; but it is too late to lament that loss; nor ought we to reflect upon it, with any other view, than that of quickening our endeavours for the preservation of those that yet remain; of which we have now a greater number, than was, perhaps, ever amassed by any one person.

The first appearance of pamphlets among us is generally thought to be at the new opposition raised against the errours and corruptions of the church of Rome. Those who were first convinced of the reasonableness of the new learning, as it was then called, propagated their opinions in small pieces, which were cheaply printed, and, what was then of great importance, easily concealed. These treatises were generally printed in foreign countries, and are not, therefore, always very correct. There was not then that opportunity of printing in private; for the number of printers was small, and the presses were easily overlooked by the clergy, who spared no labour or vigilance for the suppression of heresy. There is, however, reason to suspect, that some attempts were made to carry on the propagation of truth by a secret press; for one of the first treatises in favour of the Reformation, is said, at the end, to be printed at "Greenwich, by the permission of the Lord of Hosts."

In the time of king Edward the sixth, the presses were employed in favour of the reformed religion, and small tracts were dispersed over the nation, to reconcile them to new forms of worship. In this

reign, likewise, political pamphlets may be said to have been begun, by the address of the rebels of Devonshire; all which means of propagating the sentiments of the people so disturbed the court, that no sooner was queen Mary resolved to reduce her subjects to the Romish superstition, but she artfully, by a charter[1], granted to certain freemen of London, in whose fidelity, no doubt, she confided, entirely prohibited ALL presses, but what should be licensed by them; which charter is that by which the corporation of Stationers in London is, at this time, incorporated.

Under the reign of queen Elizabeth, when liberty again began to flourish, the practice of writing pamphlets became more general; presses were multiplied, and books were dispersed; and, I believe, it may properly be said, that the trade of writing began at this time, and that it has, ever since, gradually increased in the number, though, perhaps, not in the style of those that followed it.

In this reign was erected the first secret press against the church, as now established, of which I have found any certain account. It was employed by the Puritans, and conveyed from one part of the nation to another, by them, as they found themselves in danger of discovery. From this press issued most of the pamphlets against Whitgift and his associates, in the ecclesiastical government; and, when

[1] Which begins thus, "Know ye, that We, considering and manifestly perceiving, that several seditious and heretical books or tracts — against the faith and sound catholick doctrine of holy mother, the Church," &c.

it was at last seized at Manchester, it was employed upon a pamphlet called More Work for a Cooper.

In the peaceable reign of king James, those minds which might, perhaps, with less disturbance of the world, have been engrossed by war, were employed in controversy; and writings of all kinds were multiplied among us. The press, however, was not wholly engaged in polemical performances, for more innocent subjects were sometimes treated; and it deserves to be remarked, because it is not generally known, that the treatises of husbandry and agriculture, which were published about that time, are so numerous, that it can scarcely be imagined by whom they were written, or to whom they were sold.

The next reign is too well known to have been a time of confusion and disturbance, and disputes of every kind; and the writings, which were produced, bear a natural proportion to the number of the questions that were discussed at that time; each party had its authors and its presses, and no endeavours were omitted to gain proselytes to every opinion. I know not whether this may not properly be called, The Age of Pamphlets; for, though they, perhaps, may not arise to such multitudes as Mr. Rawlinson imagined, they were, undoubtedly, more numerous than can be conceived by any who have not had an opportunity of examining them.

After the Restoration, the same differences, in religious opinions, are well known to have subsisted, and the same political struggles to have been frequently renewed; and, therefore, a great number of

pens were employed, on different occasions, till, at length, all other disputes were absorbed in the popish controversy.

From the pamphlets which these different periods of time produced, it is proposed, that this miscellany shall be compiled, for which it cannot be supposed that materials will be wanting; and, therefore, the only difficulty will be in what manner to dispose them.

Those who have gone before us, in undertakings of this kind, have ranged the pamphlets, which chance threw into their hands, without any regard either to the subject on which they treated, or the time in which they were written; a practice in no wise to be imitated by us, who want for no materials; of which we shall choose those we think best for the particular circumstances of times and things, and most instructing and entertaining to the reader.

Of the different methods which present themselves, upon the first view of the great heaps of pamphlets which the Harleian library exhibits[j], the two which merit most attention are, to distribute the treatises according to their subjects, or their dates; but neither of these ways can be conveniently followed. By ranging our collection in order of time, we must necessarily publish those pieces first, which least engage the curiosity of the bulk of mankind; and our design must fall to the ground, for want of encouragement, before it can be so far ad-

[j] The pamphlets in the Harleian collection amounted in number to about 400,000. See Gough's Brit. Topog. 1669.

vanced as to obtain general regard: by confining ourselves for any long time to any single subject, we shall reduce our readers to one class; and, as we shall lose all the grace of variety, shall disgust all those who read chiefly to be diverted. There is, likewise, one objection of equal force, against both these methods, that we shall preclude ourselves from the advantage of any future discoveries; and we cannot hope to assemble at once all the pamphlets which have been written in any age, or on any subject.

It may be added, in vindication of our intended practice, that it is the same with that of Photius, whose collections are no less miscellaneous than ours, and who declares, that he leaves it to his reader, to reduce his extracts under their proper heads.

Most of the pieces which shall be offered in this collection to the publick, will be introduced by short prefaces, in which will be given some account of the reasons for which they are inserted; notes will be sometimes adjoined, for the explanation of obscure passages, or obsolete expressions; and care will be taken to mingle use and pleasure through the whole collection. Notwithstanding every subject may not be relished by every reader, yet the buyer may be assured that each number will repay his generous subscription.

PREFACE TO CATALOGUE OF THE HARLEIAN LIBRARY, VOL. III

HAVING prefixed to the former volumes of my catalogue an account of the prodigious collection accumulated in the Harleian library, there would have been no necessity of any introduction to the subsequent volumes, had not some censures, which this great undertaking has drawn upon me, made it proper to offer to the publick an apology for my conduct.

The price, which I have set upon my catalogue, has been represented by the booksellers as an avaricious innovation; and, in a paper published in the Champion, they, or their mercenary, have reasoned so justly, as to allege, that, if I could afford a very large price for the library, I might, therefore, afford to give away the catalogue.

I should have imagined that accusations, concerted by such heads as these, would have vanished of themselves, without any answer; but, since I have the mortification to find that they have been in some degree regarded by men of more knowledge than themselves, I shall explain the motives of my procedure.

My original design was, as I have already explained, to publish a methodical and exact catalogue of this library, upon the plan which has been laid down, as I am informed, by several men of the first rank among the learned. It was intended by those who undertook the work, to make a very exact disposition of all the subjects, and to give an

account of the remarkable differences of the editions, and other peculiarities, which make any book eminently valuable: and it was imagined, that some improvements might, by pursuing this scheme, be made in literary history.

With this view was the catalogue begun, when the price was fixed upon it in publick advertisements; and it cannot be denied, that such a catalogue would have been willingly purchased by those who understood its use. But, when a few sheets had been printed, it was discovered, that the scheme was impracticable, without more hands than could be procured, or more time than the necessity of a speedy sale would allow: the catalogue was, therefore, continued without notes, at least in the greatest part; and, though it was still performed better than those which are daily offered to the publick, fell much below the original design.

It was then no longer proper to insist upon a price; and, therefore, though money was demanded, upon delivery of the catalogue, it was only taken as a pledge that the catalogue was not, as is very frequent, wantonly called for, by those who never intended to peruse it, and I, therefore, promised that it should be taken again in exchange for any book rated at the same value.

It may be still said, that other booksellers give away their catalogues without any such precaution, and that I ought not to make any new or extraordinary demands. But I hope it will be considered, at how much greater expense my catalogue was

drawn up: and be remembered, that when other booksellers give their catalogues, they give only what will be of no use when their books are sold, and what, if it remained in their hands, they must throw away: whereas I hope that this catalogue will retain its use, and, consequently, its value, and be sold with the catalogues of the Barberinian and Marckian libraries.

However, to comply with the utmost expectations of the world, I have now published the second part of my catalogue, upon conditions still more commodious for the purchaser, as I intend, that all those who are pleased to receive them at the same price of five shillings a volume, shall be allowed, at any time, within three months after the day of sale, either to return them in exchange for books, or to send them back, and receive their money.

Since, therefore, I have absolutely debarred myself from receiving any advantage from the sale of the catalogue, it will be reasonable to impute it rather to necessity than choice, that I shall continue it to two volumes more, which the number of the single tracts which have been discovered, makes indispensably requisite. I need not tell those who are acquainted with affairs of this kind, how much pamphlets swell a catalogue, since the title of the least book may be as long as that of the greatest.

Pamphlets have been for many years, in this nation, the canals of controversy, politicks, and sacred history, and, therefore, will, doubtless, furnish occasion to a very great number of curious remarks. And

I take this opportunity of proposing to those who are particularly delighted with this kind of study, that, if they will encourage me, by a reasonable subscription, to employ men qualified to make the observations, for which this part of the catalogue will furnish occasion, I will procure the whole fifth and sixth volumes[k] to be executed in the same manner with the most laboured part of this, and interspersed with notes of the same kind.

If any excuse were necessary for the addition of these volumes, I have already urged in my defence the strongest plea, no less than absolute necessity, it being impossible to comprise in four volumes, however large, or however closely printed, the titles which yet remain to be mentioned.

But, I suppose, none will blame the multiplication of volumes, to whatever number they may be continued, which every one may use without buying them, and which are, therefore, published at no expense but my own.

There is one accusation still remaining, by which I am more sensibly affected, and which I am, therefore, desirous to obviate, before it has too long prevailed. I hear that I am accused of rating my books at too high a price, at a price which no other person would demand. To answer this accusation, it is necessary to inquire what those who urge it, mean by a high price. The price of things, valuable for their rarity, is entirely arbitrary, and depends upon the variable

[k] This scheme was never executed; the fifth volume, the only one subsequently published, was a mere shop catalogue.

taste of mankind, and the casual fluctuation of the fashion, and can never be ascertained, like that of things only estimable according to their use.

If, therefore, I have set a high value upon books: if I have vainly imagined literature to be more fashionable than it really is, or idly hoped to revive a taste well nigh extinguished, I know not why I should be persecuted with clamour and invective, since I only shall suffer by my mistake, and be obliged to keep those books, which I was in hopes of selling.

If those who charge me with asking a *high price*, will explain their meaning, it may be possible to give them an answer less general. If they measure the price at which the books are now offered, by that at which they were bought by the late possessor, they will find it diminished at least three parts in four; if they would compare it with the demands of other booksellers, they must first find the same books in their hands, and they will be, perhaps, at last reduced to confess, that they mean, by a high price, only a price higher than they are inclined to give.

I have, at least, a right to hope, that no gentleman will receive an account of the price from the booksellers, of whom it may easily be imagined that they will be willing, since they cannot depreciate the books, to exaggerate the price: and I will boldly promise those who have been influenced by malevolent reports, that, if they will be pleased, at the day of sale, to examine the prices with their own eyes, they will find them lower than they have been represented.

CROUSAZ-WARBURTON CONTROVERSY ON POPE'S ESSAY ON MAN

In a Letter to the Editor of the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xiii. 1743.

MR. URBAN,

IT would not be found useless in the learned world, if in written controversies as in oral disputations, a moderator could be selected, who might, in some degree, superintend the debate, restrain all needless excursions, repress all personal reflections, and, at last, recapitulate the arguments on each side; and who, though he should not assume the province of deciding the question, might at least exhibit it in its true state.

This reflection arose in my mind upon the consideration of Mr. Crousaz's commentary on the Essay on Man, and Mr. Warburton's answer to it. The importance of the subject, the reputation and abilities of the controvertists, and, perhaps, the ardour with which each has endeavoured to support his cause, have made an attempt of this kind necessary for the information of the greatest number of Mr. Pope's readers.

Among the duties of a moderator, I have mentioned that of recalling the disputants to the subject, and cutting off the excrescences of a debate, which Mr. Crousaz will not suffer to be long unemployed, and the repression of personal invectives which have not been very carefully avoided on either part, and are less excusable, because it has not been proved, that, either the poet, or his commentator, wrote with

any other design than that of promoting happiness by cultivating reason and piety.

Mr. Warburton has, indeed, so much depressed the character of his adversary, that before I consider the controversy between them, I think it necessary to exhibit some specimens of Mr. Crousaz's sentiments, by which it will probably be shown, that he is far from deserving either indignation or contempt; that his notions are just, though they are sometimes introduced without necessity; and defended when they are not opposed; and that his abilities and piety are such as may entitle him to reverence from those who think his criticisms superfluous.

In page 35 of the English translation, he exhibits an observation which every writer ought to impress upon his mind, and which may afford a sufficient apology for his commentary.

On the notion of a ruling passion he offers this remark: "Nothing so much hinders men from obtaining a complete victory over their ruling passion, as that all the advantages gained in their days of retreat, by just and sober reflections, whether struck out by their own minds, or borrowed from good books, or from the conversation of men of merit, are destroyed in a few moments by a free intercourse and acquaintance with libertines; and, thus, the work is always to be begun anew. A gamester resolves to leave off play, by which he finds his health impaired, his family ruined, and his passions inflamed; in this resolution he persists a few days, but soon yields to an invitation, which will give his prevailing inclination an

opportunity of reviving in all its force. The case is the same with other men; but is reason to be charged with these calamities and follies, or rather the man who refuses to listen to its voice in opposition to impertinent solicitations ?"

On the means, recommended for the attainment of happiness, he observes, "that the abilities which our Maker has given us, and the internal and external advantages with which he has invested us, are of two very different kinds; those of one kind are bestowed in common upon us and the brute creation, but the other exalt us far above other animals. To disregard any of these gifts would be ingratitude; but to neglect those of greater excellence, to go no farther than the gross satisfactions of sense, and the functions of mere animal life, would be a far greater crime. We are formed by our Creator capable of acquiring knowledge, and regulating our conduct by reasonable rules; it is, therefore, our duty to cultivate our understandings, and exalt our virtues. We need but make the experiment to find, that the greatest pleasures will arise from such endeavours.

"It is trifling to allege, in opposition to this truth, that knowledge cannot be acquired, nor virtue pursued, without toil and efforts, and that all efforts produce fatigue. God requires nothing disproportioned to the powers he has given, and in the exercise of those powers consists the highest satisfaction.

"Toil and weariness are the effects of vanity: when a man has formed a design of excelling others in merit, he is disquieted by their advances, and

leaves nothing unattempted, that he may step before them: this occasions a thousand unreasonable emotions, which justly bring their punishment along with them.

"But let a man study and labour to cultivate and improve his abilities in the eye of his Maker, and with the prospect of his approbation; let him attentively reflect on the infinite value of that approbation, and the highest encomiums that men can bestow will vanish into nothing at the comparison. When we live in this manner, we find that we live for a great and glorious end.

"When this is our frame of mind, we find it no longer difficult to restrain ourselves in the gratifications of eating and drinking, the most gross enjoyments of sense. We take what is necessary to preserve health and vigour, but are not to give ourselves up to pleasures that weaken the attention, and dull the understanding."

And the true sense of Mr. Pope's assertion, that "Whatever is, is right," and, I believe, the sense in which it was written, is thus explained:—"A sacred and adorable order is established in the government of mankind. These are certain and unvaried truths: he that seeks God, and makes it his happiness to live in obedience to him, shall obtain what he endeavours after, in a degree far above his present comprehension. He that turns his back upon his Creator, neglects to obey him, and perseveres in his disobedience, shall obtain no other happiness than he can receive from enjoyments of his own procur-

ing; void of satisfaction, weary of life, wasted by empty cares and remorses, equally harassing and just, he will experience the certain consequences of his own choice. Thus will justice and goodness resume their empire, and that order be restored which men have broken."

I am afraid of wearying you or your readers with more quotations, but if you shall inform me that a continuation of my correspondence will be well received, I shall descend to particular passages, show how Mr. Pope gave sometimes occasion to mistakes, and how Mr. Crousaz was misled by his suspicion of the system of fatality[1].

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

[1] It does not appear that Dr. Johnson found leisure or encouragement to continue this subject any farther.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE TO THE LONDON CHRONICLE

JANUARY 1, 1757

IT has always been lamented, that of the little time allotted to man, much must be spent upon superfluities. Every prospect has its obstructions, which we must break to enlarge our view; every step of our progress finds impediments, which, however eager to go forward, we must stop to remove. Even those who profess to teach the way to happiness, have multiplied our encumbrances, and the author of almost every book retards his instructions by a preface.

The writers of the Chronicle hope to be easily forgiven, though they should not be free from an infection that has seized the whole fraternity, and instead of falling immediately to their subjects, should detain the reader for a time with an account of the importance of their design, the extent of their plan, and the accuracy of the method which they intend to prosecute. Such premonitions, though not always necessary when the reader has the book complete in his hand, and may find, by his own eyes, whatever can be found in it, yet may be more easily allowed to works published gradually in successive parts, of which the scheme can only be so far known as the author shall think fit to discover it.

The paper which we now invite the publick to add to the papers with which it is already rather wearied than satisfied, consists of many parts, some

of which it has in common with other periodical sheets, and some peculiar to itself.

The first demand, made by the reader of a journal, is, that he should find an accurate account of foreign transactions and domestick incidents. This is always expected, but this is very rarely performed. Of those writers who have taken upon themselves the task of intelligence, some have given and others have sold their abilities, whether small or great, to one or other of the parties that divide us; and without a wish for truth or thought of decency, without care of any other reputation than that of a stubborn adherence to their abettors, carry on the same tenour of representation through all the vicissitudes of right and wrong, neither depressed by detection, nor abashed by confutation, proud of the hourly increase of infamy, and ready to boast of all the contumelies that falsehood and slander may bring upon them, as new proofs of their zeal and fidelity.

With these heroes we have no ambition to be numbered; we leave to the confessors of faction the merit of their sufferings, and are desirous to shelter ourselves under the protection of truth. That all our facts will be authentick, or all our remarks just, we dare not venture to promise: we can relate but what we hear, we can point out but what we see. Of remote transactions, the first accounts are always confused, and commonly exaggerated: and in domestick affairs, if the power to conceal is less, the interest to misrepresent is often greater; and, what is sufficiently vexatious, truth seems to fly from

curiosity, and as many inquiries produce many narratives, whatever engages the publick attention is immediately disguised by the embellishments of fiction. We pretend to no peculiar power of disentangling contradiction or denuding forgery, we have no settled correspondence with the antipodes, nor maintain any spies in the cabinets of princes. But as we shall always be conscious that our mistakes are involuntary, we shall watch the gradual discoveries of time, and retract whatever we have hastily and erroneously advanced.

In the narratives of the daily writers every reader perceives somewhat of neatness and purity wanting, which, at the first view, it seems easy to supply; but it must be considered, that those passages must be written in haste, and, that there is often no other choice, but that they must want either novelty or accuracy; and that, as life is very uniform, the affairs of one week are so like those of another, that by any attempt after variety of expression, invention would soon be wearied, and language exhausted. Some improvements, however, we hope to make; and for the rest we think that, when we commit only common faults, we shall not be excluded from common indulgence.

The accounts of prices of corn and stocks are to most of our readers of more importance than narratives of greater sound; and, as exactness is here within the reach of diligence, our readers may justly require it from us.

Memorials of a private and personal kind, which

relate deaths, marriages, and preferments, must always be imperfect by omission, and often erroneous by misinformation; but even in these there shall not be wanting care to avoid mistakes, or to rectify them, whenever they shall be found.

That part of our work, by which it is distinguished from all others, is the literary journal, or account of the labours and productions of the learned. This was for a long time among the deficiencies of English literature; but, as the caprice of man is always starting from too little to too much, we have now, amongst other disturbers of human quiet, a numerous body of reviewers and remarkers.

Every art is improved by the emulation of competitors; those who make no advances towards excellence, may stand as warnings against faults. We shall endeavour to avoid that petulance which treats with contempt whatever has hitherto been reputed sacred. We shall repress that elation of malignity, which wantons in the cruelties of criticism, and not only murders reputation, but murders it by torture. Whenever we feel ourselves ignorant we shall at least be modest. Our intention is not to preoccupy judgment by praise or censure, but to gratify curiosity by early intelligence, and to tell rather what our authors have attempted, than what they have performed. The titles of books are necessarily short, and, therefore, disclose but imperfectly the contents; they are sometimes fraudulent and intended to raise false expectations. In our account this brevity will be extended, and these frauds, whenever they are

detected, will be exposed; for though we write without intention to injure, we shall not suffer ourselves to be made parties to deceit.

If any author shall transmit a summary of his work, we shall willingly receive it; if any literary anecdote, or curious observation, shall be communicated to us, we will carefully insert it. Many facts are known and forgotten, many observations are made and suppressed; and entertainment and instruction are frequently lost, for want of a repository in which they may be conveniently preserved.

No man can modestly promise what he cannot ascertain: we hope for the praise of knowledge and discernment, but we claim only that of diligence and candour[m].

[m] Dr. Johnson received the humble reward of a guinea from Mr. Dodsley for this composition.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD DISPLAYED[n]

NAVIGATION, like other arts, has been perfected by degrees. It is not easy to conceive that any age or nation was without some vessel, in which rivers might be passed by travellers, or lakes frequented by fishermen; but we have no knowledge of any ship that could endure the violence of the ocean before the ark of Noah.

As the tradition of the deluge has been transmitted to almost all the nations of the earth, it must be supposed that the memory of the means, by which Noah and his family were preserved, would be continued long among their descendants, and that the possibility of passing the seas could never be doubted.

What men know to be practicable, a thousand motives will incite them to try; and there is reason to believe, that from the time that the generations of the postdiluvian race spread to the seashores, there were always navigators that ventured upon the sea, though, perhaps, not willingly beyond the sight of land.

Of the ancient voyages little certain is known, and it is not necessary to lay before the reader such conjectures as learned men have offered to the world. The Romans, by conquering Carthage, put a stop to great part of the trade of distant nations with one another, and because they thought only on war and

[n] A collection of Voyages and Travels, selected from the writers of all nations, in twenty small pocket volumes, and published by Newbery; to oblige whom, it is conjectured that Johnson drew up this curious and learned paper, which appeared in the first volume, 1759.

conquest, as their empire increased, commerce was discouraged; till under the latter emperours, ships seem to have been of little other use than to transport soldiers.

Navigation could not be carried to any great degree of certainty without the compass, which was unknown to the ancients. The wonderful quality by which a needle or small bar of steel, touched with a loadstone or magnet, and turning freely by equilibration on a point, always preserves the meridian, and directs its two ends north and south, was discovered, according to the common opinion, in 1299, by John Gola of Amalfi, a town in Italy.

From this time it is reasonable to suppose that navigation made continual, though slow, improvements, which the confusion and barbarity of the times, and the want of communication between orders of men so distant as sailors and monks, hindered from being distinctly and successively recorded.

It seems, however, that the sailors still wanted either knowledge or courage, for they continued for two centuries to creep along the coast, and considered every headland as unpassable, which ran far into the sea, and against which the waves broke with uncommon agitation.

The first who is known to have formed the design of new discoveries, or the first who had power to execute his purposes, was Don Henry the fifth°,

° Read Mickle's very excellent introduction to his translation of Camoens' Lusiad.— Ed.

son of John, the first king of Portugal, and Philippina, sister of Henry the fourth of England. Don Henry, having attended his father to the conquest of Ceuta, obtained, by conversation with the inhabitants of the continent, some accounts of the interiour kingdoms and southern coast of Africa; which, though rude and indistinct, were sufficient to raise his curiosity, and convince him, that there were countries yet unknown and worthy of discovery.

He, therefore, equipped some small vessels, and commanded that they should pass, as far as they could, along that coast of Africa which looked upon the great Atlantick ocean, the immensity of which struck the gross and unskilful navigators of those times with terrour and amazement. He was not able to communicate his own ardour to his seamen, who proceeded very slowly in the new attempt; each was afraid to venture much farther than he that went before him, and ten years were spent before they had advanced beyond cape Bajador, so called from its progression into the ocean, and the circuit by which it must be doubled. The opposition of this promontory to the course of the sea, produced a violent current and high waves, into which they durst not venture, and which they had not yet knowledge enough to avoid, by standing off from the land into the open sea.

The prince was desirous to know something of the countries that lay beyond this formidable cape, and sent two commanders, named John Gonzales Zarco, and Tristan Vas, in 1418, to pass be-

yond Bajador, and survey the coast behind it. They were caught by a tempest, which drove them out into the unknown ocean, where they expected to perish by the violence of the wind, or, perhaps, to wander forever in the boundless deep. At last, in the midst of their despair, they found a small island, where they sheltered themselves, and which the sense of their deliverance disposed them to call Puerto Santo, or the Holy Haven.

When they returned with an account of this new island, Henry performed a publick act of thanksgiving, and sent them again with seeds and cattle; and we are told by the Spanish historian, that they set two rabbits on shore, which increased so much in a few years, that they drove away the inhabitants, by destroying their corn and plants, and were suffered to enjoy the island without opposition.

In the second or third voyage to Puerto Santo, (for authors do not agree which,) a third captain, called Perello, was joined to the two former. As they looked round the island upon the ocean, they saw at a distance something which they took for a cloud, till they perceived that it did not change its place. They directed their course towards it, and, in 1419, discovered another island covered with trees, which they, therefore, called Madera, or the Isle of Wood.

Madera was given to Vaz or Zarco, who set fire to the woods, which are reported by Souza to have burnt for seven years together, and to have been wasted, till want of wood was the greatest incon-

veniency of the place. But green wood is not very apt to burn, and the heavy rains which fall in these countries must, surely, have extinguished the conflagration, were it ever so violent.

There was yet little progress made upon the southern coast, and Henry's project was treated as chimerical by many of his countrymen. At last Gilianes, in 1433, passed the dreadful cape, to which he gave the name of Bajador, and came back, to the wonder of the nation.

In two voyages more, made in the two following years, they passed forty-two leagues farther, and in the latter, two men with horses being set on shore, wandered over the country, and found nineteen men, whom, according to the savage manners of that age, they attacked; the natives, having javelins, wounded one of the Portuguese, and received some wounds from them. At the mouth of a river they found sea-wolves in great numbers, and brought home many of their skins, which were much esteemed.

Antonio Gonzales, who had been one of the associates of Gilianes, was sent again, in 1440, to bring back a cargo of the skins of sea-wolves. He was followed in another ship by Nunno Tristam. They were now of strength sufficient to venture upon violence; they, therefore, landed, and, without either right or provocation, made all whom they seized their prisoners, and brought them to Portugal, with great commendations both from the prince and the nation.

Henry now began to please himself with the success of his projects, and, as one of his purposes was the conversion of infidels, he thought it necessary to impart his undertaking to the pope, and to obtain the sanction of ecclesiastical authority. To this end Fernando Lopez d'Azevedo was despatched to Rome, who related to the pope and cardinals the great designs of Henry, and magnified his zeal for the propagation of religion. The pope was pleased with the narrative, and by a formal bull, conferred upon the crown of Portugal all the countries which should be discovered as far as India, together with India itself, and granted several privileges and indulgences to the churches which Henry had built in his new regions, and to the men engaged in the navigation for discovery. By this bull all other princes were forbidden to encroach upon the conquests of the Portuguese, on pain of the censures incurred by the crime of usurpation.

The approbation of the pope, the sight of men, whose manners and appearance were so different from those of Europeans, and the hope of gain from golden regions, which has been always the great incentive to hazard and discovery, now began to operate with full force. The desire of riches and of dominion, which is yet more pleasing to the fancy, filled the court of the Portuguese prince with innumerable adventurers from very distant parts of Europe. Some wanted to be employed in the search after new countries, and some to be settled in those which had been already found.

Communities now began to be animated by the spirit of enterprise, and many associations were formed for the equipment of ships, and the acquisition of the riches of distant regions, which, perhaps, were always supposed to be more wealthy, as more remote. These undertakers agreed to pay the prince a fifth part of the profit, sometimes a greater share, and sent out the armament at their own expense.

The city of Lagos was the first that carried on this design by contribution. The inhabitants fitted out six vessels, under the command of Lucarot, one of the prince's household, and soon after fourteen more were furnished for the same purpose, under the same commander; to those were added many belonging to private men, so that, in a short time, twenty-six ships put to sea in quest of whatever fortune should present.

The ships of Lagos were soon separated by foul weather, and the rest, taking each its own course, stopped at different parts of the African coast, from cape Blanco to cape Verd. Some of them, in 1444, anchored at Gomera, one of the Canaries, where they were kindly treated by the inhabitants, who took them into their service against the people of the isle of Palma, with whom they were at war; but the Portuguese, at their return to Gomera, not being made so rich as they expected, fell upon their friends, in contempt of all the laws of hospitality and stipulations of alliance, and, making several of them prisoners and slaves, set sail for Lisbon.

The Canaries are supposed to have been known,

however imperfectly, to the ancients; but, in the confusion of the subsequent ages, they were lost and forgotten, till, about the year 1340, the Biscayners found Lucarot, and invading it, (for to find a new country, and invade it has always been the same,) brought away seventy captives, and some commodities of the place. Louis de la Cerda, count of Clermont, of the blood royal both of France and Spain, nephew of John de la Cerda, who called himself the Prince of Fortune, had once a mind to settle in those islands, and applying himself first to the king of Arragon, and then to Clement the sixth, was by the pope crowned at Avignon, king of the Canaries, on condition that he should reduce them to the true religion; but the prince altered his mind, and went into France to serve against the English. The kings both of Castile and Portugal, though they did not oppose the papal grant, yet complained of it, as made without their knowledge, and in contravention of their rights.

The first settlement in the Canaries was made by John de Betancour, a French gentleman, for whom his kinsman Robin de Braquement, admiral of France, begged them, with the title of king, from Henry the magnificent of Castile, to whom he had done eminent services. John made himself master of some of the isles, but could never conquer the grand Canary; and having spent all that he had, went back to Europe, leaving his nephew, Massiot de Betancour, to take care of his new dominion. Massiot had a quarrel with the vicar-general, and

was, likewise, disgusted by the long absence of his uncle, whom the French king detained in his service, and being able to keep his ground no longer, he transferred his rights to Don Henry, in exchange for some districts in the Madera, where he settled his family.

Don Henry, when he had purchased those islands, sent thither, in 1424, two thousand five hundred foot, and a hundred and twenty horse; but the army was too numerous to be maintained by the country. The king of Castile afterwards claimed them, as conquered by his subjects under Betancour, and held under the crown of Castile by fealty and homage: his claim was allowed, and the Canaries were resigned.

It was the constant practice of Henry's navigators, when they stopped at a desert island, to land cattle upon it, and leave them to breed, where, neither wanting room nor food, they multiplied very fast, and furnished a very commodious supply to those who came afterwards to the same place. This was imitated, in some degree, by Anson, at the isle of Juan Fernandez.

The island of Madera he not only filled with inhabitants, assisted by artificers of every kind, but procured such plants as seemed likely to flourish in that climate, and introduced the sugar-canes and vines which afterwards produced a very large revenue.

The trade of Africa now began to be profitable, but a great part of the gain arose from the sale of slaves, who were annually brought into Portugal, by hundreds, as Lafitau relates, and without any ap-

pearance of indignation or compassion; they, likewise, imported gold dust in such quantities, that Alphonso the fifth coined it into a new species of money called Crusades, which is still continued in Portugal.

In time they made their way along the south coast of Africa, eastward to the country of the negroes, whom they found living in tents, without any political institutions, supporting life, with very little labour, by the milk of their kine, and millet, to which those who inhabited the coast added fish dried in the sun. Having never seen the natives, or heard of the arts of Europe, they gazed with astonishment on the ships, when they approached their coasts, sometimes thinking them birds, and sometimes fishes, according as their sails were spread or lowered; and sometimes conceiving them to be only phantoms, which played to and fro in the ocean. Such is the account given by the historian, perhaps, with too much prejudice against a negro's understanding, who, though he might well wonder at the bulk and swiftness of the first ship, would scarcely conceive it to be either a bird or a fish, but having seen many bodies floating in the water, would think it, what it really is, a large boat; and, if he had no knowledge of any means by which separate pieces of timber may be joined together, would form very wild notions concerning its construction, or, perhaps, suppose it to be a hollow trunk of a tree, from some country where trees grow to a much greater height and thickness than in his own.

When the Portuguese came to land, they increased the astonishment of the poor inhabitants, who saw men clad in iron, with thunder and lightning in their hands. They did not understand each other, and signs are a very imperfect mode of communication, even to men of more knowledge than the negroes, so that they could not easily negotiate or traffick: at last the Portuguese laid hands on some of them, to carry them home for a sample; and their dread and amazement was raised, says Lafitau, to the highest pitch, when the Europeans fired their cannons and muskets among them, and they saw their companions fall dead at their feet, without any enemy at hand, or any visible cause of their destruction.

On what occasion, or for what purpose, cannons and muskets were discharged among a people harmless and secure, by strangers who, without any right, visited their coast, it is not thought necessary to inform us. The Portuguese could fear nothing from them, and had, therefore, no adequate provocation; nor is there any reason to believe but that they murdered the negroes in wanton merriment, perhaps, only to try how many a volley would destroy, or what would be the consternation of those that should escape. We are openly told, that they had the less scruple concerning their treatment of the savage people, because they scarcely considered them as distinct from beasts; and, indeed, the practice of all the European nations, and among others, of the English barbarians that cultivate the south-

ern islands of America, proves, that this opinion, however absurd and foolish, however wicked and injurious, still continues to prevail. Interest and pride harden the heart, and it is in vain to dispute against avarice and power.

By these practices the first discoverers alienated the natives from them; and whenever a ship appeared, every one that could fly betook himself to the mountains and the woods, so that nothing was to be got more than they could steal: they sometimes surprised a few fishers, and made them slaves, and did what they could to offend the negroes, and enrich themselves. This practice of robbery continued till some of the negroes, who had been enslaved, learned the language of Portugal, so as to be able to interpret for their countrymen, and one John Fernandez applied himself to the negro tongue.

From this time began something like a regular traffick, such as can subsist between nations where all the power is on one side; and a factory was settled in the isle of Arguin, under the protection of a fort. The profit of this new trade was assigned, for a certain term, to Ferdinando Gomez; which seems to be the common method of establishing a trade, that is yet too small to engage the care of a nation, and can only be enlarged by that attention which is bestowed by private men upon private advantage. Gomez continued the discoveries to cape Catharine, two degrees and a half beyond the line.

In the latter part of the reign of Alphonso the fifth, the ardour of discovery was somewhat intermitted,

and all commercial enterprises were interrupted by the wars in which he was engaged with various success. But John the second, who succeeded, being fully convinced both of the honour and advantage of extending his dominions in countries hitherto unknown, prosecuted the designs of prince Henry with the utmost vigour, and in a short time added to his other titles, that of king of Guinea and of the coast of Africa.

In 1463, in the third year of the reign of John the second, died prince Henry, the first encourager of remote navigation, by whose incitement, patron age and example, distant nations have been made acquainted with each other, unknown countries have been brought into general view, and the power of Europe has been extended to the remotest parts of the world. What mankind has lost and gained by the genius and designs of this prince, it would be long to compare, and very difficult to estimate. Much knowledge has been acquired, and much cruelty been committed; the belief of religion has been very little propagated, and its laws have been outrageously and enormously violated. The Europeans have scarcely visited any coast, but to gratify avarice, and extend corruption; to arrogate dominion without right, and practise cruelty without incentive. Happy had it, then, been for the oppressed, if the designs of Henry had slept in his bosom, and surely more happy for the oppressors. But there is reason to hope that out of so much evil, good may sometimes be produced; and that the light of the gospel

will at last illuminate the sands of Africa, and the deserts of America, though its progress cannot but be slow, when it is so much obstructed by the lives of Christians.

The death of Henry did not interrupt the progress of king John, who was very strict in his injunctions, not only to make discoveries, but to secure possession of the countries that were found. The practice of the first navigators was only to raise a cross upon the coast, and to carve upon trees the device of Don Henry, the name which they thought it proper to give to the new coast, and any other information, for those that might happen to follow them; but now they began to erect piles of stone with a cross on the top, and engraved on the stone the arms of Portugal, the name of the king, and of the commander of the ship, with the day and year of the discovery. This was accounted sufficient to prove their claim to the new lands; which might be pleaded, with justice enough, against any other Europeans, and the rights of the original inhabitants were never taken into notice. Of these stone records, nine more were erected in the reign of king John, along the coast of Africa, as far as the cape of Good Hope.

The fortress in the isle of Arguin was finished, and it was found necessary to build another at S. Georgio de la Mina, a few degrees north of the line, to secure the trade of gold dust, which was chiefly carried on at that place. For this purpose a fleet was fitted out, of ten large and three smaller vessels,

freighted with materials for building the fort, and with provisions and ammunition for six hundred men, of whom one hundred were workmen and labourers. Father Lafitau relates, in very particular terms, that these ships carried hewn stones, bricks, and timber, for the fort, so that nothing remained but barely to erect it. He does not seem to consider how small a fort could be made out of the lading of ten ships.

The command of this fleet was given to Don Diego d'Azambue, who set sail December 11, 1481, and reaching La Mina January 19, 1482, gave immediate notice of his arrival to Caramansa, a petty prince of that part of the country, whom he very earnestly invited to an immediate conference.

Having received a message of civility from the negro chief, he landed, and chose a rising ground, proper for his intended fortress, on which he planted a banner with the arms of Portugal, and took possession in the name of his master. He then raised an altar at the foot of a great tree, on which mass was celebrated, the whole assembly, says Lafitau, breaking out into tears of devotion at the prospect of inviting these barbarous nations to the profession of the true faith. Being secure of the goodness of the end, they had no scruple about the means, nor ever considered how differently from the primitive martyrs and apostles they were attempting to make proselytes. The first propagators of Christianity recommended their doctrines by their sufferings and virtues; they entered no defenceless territories with swords in their hands; they built no forts upon

ground to which they had no right, nor polluted the purity of religion with the avarice of trade, or insolence of power.

What may still raise higher the indignation of a Christian mind, this purpose of propagating truth appears never to have been seriously pursued by any European nation; no means, whether lawful or unlawful, have been practised with diligence and perseverance for the conversion of savages. When a fort is built, and a factory established, there remains no other care than to grow rich. It is soon found that ignorance is most easily kept in subjection, and that by enlightening the mind with truth, fraud and usurpation would be made less practicable and less secure.

In a few days an interview was appointed between Caramansa and Azambue. The Portuguese uttered, by his interpreter, a pompous speech, in which he made the negro prince large offers of his master's friendship, exhorting him to embrace the religion of his new ally; and told him, that, as they came to form a league of friendship with him, it was necessary that they should build a fort, which might serve as a retreat from their common enemies, and in which the Portuguese might be always at hand to lend him assistance.

The negro, who seemed very well to understand what the admiral intended, after a short pause, returned an answer full of respect to the king of Portugal, but appeared a little doubtful what to determine with relation to the fort. The commander

saw his diffidence, and used all his art of persuasion to overcome it. Caramansa, either induced by hope, or constrained by fear, either desirous to make them friends, or not daring to make them enemies, consented, with a show of joy, to that which it was not in his power to refuse; and the new comers began the next day to break the ground for the foundation of a fort.

Within the limit of their intended fortification were some spots appropriated to superstitious practices; which the negroes no sooner perceived in danger of violation by the spade and pickaxe, than they ran to arms, and began to interrupt the work. The Portuguese persisted in their purpose, and there had soon been tumult and bloodshed, had not the admiral, who was at a distance to superintend the unlading the materials for the edifice, been informed of the danger. He was told, at the same time, that the support of their superstition was only a pretence, and that all their rage might be appeased by the presents which the prince expected, the delay of which had greatly offended him.

The Portuguese admiral immediately ran to his men, prohibited all violence, and stopped the commotion; he then brought out the presents, and spread them with great pomp before the prince; if they were of no great value, they were rare, for the negroes had never seen such wonders before; they were, therefore, received with ecstacy, and, perhaps, the Portuguese derided them for their fondness of trifles, without considering how many things derive

their value only from their scarcity, and that gold and rubies would be trifles, if nature had scattered them with less frugality.

The work was now peaceably continued, and such was the diligence with which the strangers hastened to secure the possession of the country, that in twenty days they had sufficiently fortified themselves against the hostility of the negroes. They then proceeded to complete their design. A church was built in the place where the first altar had been raised, on which a mass was established to be celebrated for ever once a day, for the repose of the soul of Henry, the first mover of these discoveries.

In this fort the admiral remained with sixty soldiers, and sent back the rest in the ships, with gold, slaves, and other commodities. It may be observed that slaves were never forgotten, and that, wherever they went, they gratified their pride, if not their avarice, and brought some of the natives, when it happened that they brought nothing else.

The Portuguese endeavoured to extend their dominions still farther. They had gained some knowledge of the Jaloffs, a nation inhabiting the cost of Guinea, between the Gambia and Senegal. The king of the Jaloffs being vicious and luxurious, committed the care of the government to Bemoin, his brother by the mother's side, in preference to two other brothers by his father. Bemoin, who wanted neither bravery nor prudence, knew that his station was invidious and dangerous, and, there-

fore, made an alliance with the Portuguese, and retained them in his defence by liberality and kindness. At last the king was killed by the contrivance of his brothers, and Bemoin was to lose his power, or maintain it by war.

He had recourse, in this exigence, to his great ally the king of Portugal, who promised to support him, on condition that he should become a Christian, and sent an ambassador, accompanied with missionaries. Bemoin promised all that was required, objecting only, that the time of a civil war was not a proper season for a change of religion, which would alienate his adherents; but said, that when he was once peaceably established, he would not only embrace the true religion himself, but would endeavour the conversion of the kingdom.

This excuse was admitted, and Bemoin delayed his conversion for a year, renewing his promise from time to time. But the war was unsuccessful, trade was at a stand, and Bemoin was not able to pay the money which he had borrowed of the Portuguese merchants, who sent intelligence to Lisbon of his delays, and received an order from the king, commanding them, under severe penalties, to return home.

Bemoin here saw his ruin approaching, and, hoping that money would pacify all resentment, borrowed of his friends a sum sufficient to discharge his debts; and finding that even this enticement would not delay the departure of the Portuguese, he embarked his nephew in their ships with a hundred

slaves, whom he presented to the king of Portugal, to solicit his assistance. The effect of this embassy he could not stay to know; for being soon after deposed, he sought shelter in the fortress of Arguin, whence he took shipping for Portugal, with twenty-five of his principal followers.

The king of Portugal pleased his own vanity and that of his subjects, by receiving him with great state and magnificence, as a mighty monarch who had fled to an ally for succour in misfortune. All the lords and ladies of the court were assembled, and Bemoin was conducted with a splendid attendance into the hall of audience, where the king rose from his throne to welcome him. Bemoin then made a speech with great ease and dignity, representing his unhappy state, and imploring the favour of his powerful ally. The king was touched with his affliction, and struck by his wisdom.

The conversion of Bemoin was much desired by the king; and it was, therefore, immediately, proposed to him that he should become a Christian. Ecclesiasticks were sent to instruct him; and having now no more obstacles from interest, he was easily persuaded to declare himself whatever would please those on whom he now depended. He was baptized on the third day of December, 1489, in the palace of the queen, with great magnificence, and named John, after the king.

Some time was spent in feasts and sports on this great occasion, and the negroes signalized themselves by many feats of agility, far surpassing the

power of Europeans, who, having more helps of art, are less diligent to cultivate the qualities of nature. In the mean time twenty large ships were fitted out, well manned, stored with ammunition, and laden with materials necessary for the erection of a fort. With this powerful armament were sent a great number of missionaries under the direction of Alvarez the king's confessor. The command of this force, which filled the coast of Africa with terrour, was given to Pedro Vaz d'Acugna, surnamed Bisagu; who, soon after they had landed, not being well pleased with his expedition, put an end to its inconveniencies, by stabbing Bemoin suddenly to the heart. The king heard of this outrage with great sorrow, but did not attempt to punish the murderer.

The king's concern for the restoration of Bemoin was not the mere effect of kindness, he hoped by his help to facilitate greater designs. He now began to form hopes of finding a way to the East Indies, and of enriching his country by that gainful commerce: this he was encouraged to believe practicable, by a map which the Moors had given to prince Henry, and which subsequent discoveries have shown to be sufficiently near to exactness, where a passage round the south east part of Africa was evidently described.

The king had another scheme, yet more likely to engage curiosity, and not irreconcilable with his interest. The world had, for some time, been filled with the report of a powerful Christian prince, called Prester John, whose country was unknown, and

whom some, after Paulus Venetus, supposed to reign in the midst of Asia, and others in the depth of Ethiopia, between the ocean and Red sea. The account of the African Christians was confirmed by some Abyssinians who had travelled into Spain, and by some friars that had visited the Holy Land; and the king was extremely desirous of their correspondence and alliance.

Some obscure intelligence had been obtained, which made it seem probable that a way might be found from the countries lately discovered, to those of this far-famed monarch. In 1486, an ambassador came from the king of Bemin, to desire that preachers might be sent to instruct him and his subjects in the true religion. He related that, in the inland country, three hundred and fifty leagues eastward from Bemin, was a mighty monarch, called Ogane, who had jurisdiction, both spiritual and temporal, over other kings; that the king of Bemin and his neighbours, at their accession, sent ambassadors to him with rich presents, and received from him the investiture of their dominions, and the marks of sovereignty, which were a kind of sceptre, a helmet, and a latten cross, without which they could not be considered as lawful kings; that this great prince was never seen but on the day of audience, and then held out one of his feet to the ambassador, who kissed it with great reverence, and who, at his departure, had a cross of latten hung on his neck, which ennobled him thenceforward, and exempted him from all servile offices.

Bemoin had, likewise, told the king, that to the east of the kingdom of Tombut, there was, among other princes, one that was neither Mahometan nor idolater, but who seemed to profess a religion nearly resembling the Christian. These informations, compared with each other, and with the current accounts of Prester John, induced the king to an opinion, which, though formed somewhat at hazard, is still believed to be right, that by passing up the river Senegal his dominions would be found. It was, therefore, ordered that, when the fortress was finished, an attempt should be made to pass upward to the source of the river. The design failed then, and has never yet succeeded.

Other ways, likewise, were tried of penetrating to the kingdom of Prester John; for the king resolved to leave neither sea nor land unsearched, till he should be found. The two messengers who were sent first on this design, went to Jerusalem, and then returned, being persuaded that, for want of understanding the language of the country, it would be vain or impossible to travel farther. Two more were then despatched, one of whom was Pedro de Covillan, the other, Alphonso de Pavia; they passed from Naples to Alexandria, and then travelled to Cairo, from whence they went to Aden, a town of Arabia, on the Red sea, near its mouth. From Aden, Pavia set sail for Ethiopia, and Covillan for the Indies. Covillan visited Canavar, Calicut, and Goa in the Indies, and Sosula in the eastern Africa, thence he returned to Aden, and then to Cairo, where he

had agreed to meet Pavia. At Cairo he was informed that Pavia was dead, but he met with two Portuguese Jews, one of whom had given the king an account of the situation and trade of Ormus: they brought orders to Covillan, that he should send one of them home with the journal of his travels, and go to Ormus with the other.

Covillan obeyed the orders, sending an exact account of his adventures to Lisbon, and proceeding with the other messenger to Ormus; where, having made sufficient inquiry, he sent his companion homewards, with the caravans that were going to Aleppo, and embarking once more on the Red sea, arrived in time at Abyssinia, and found the prince whom he had sought so long, and with such danger.

Two ships were sent out upon the same search, of which Bartholomew Diaz had the chief command; they were attended by a smaller vessel laden with provisions, that they might not return, upon pretence of want either felt or feared.

Navigation was now brought nearer to perfection. The Portuguese claim the honour of many inventions by which the sailor is assisted, and which enable him to leave sight of land, and commit himself to the boundless ocean. Diaz had orders to proceed beyond the river Zaire, where Diego Can had stopped, to build monuments of his discoveries, and to leave upon the coasts negro men and women well instructed, who might inquire after Prester John, and fill the natives with reverence for the Portuguese.

Diaz, with much opposition from his crew, whose

mutinies he repressed, partly by softness, and partly by steadiness, sailed on till he reached the utmost point of Africa, which from the bad weather that he met there, he called cabo Tormentoso, or the cape of Storms. He would have gone forward, but his crew forced him to return. In his way back he met the victualler, from which he had been parted nine months before; of the nine men, which were in it at the separation, six had been killed by the negroes, and of the three remaining, one died for joy at the sight of his friends. Diaz returned to Lisbon in December, 1487, and gave an account of his voyage to the king, who ordered the cape of Storms to be called thenceforward cabo de Buena Esperanza, or the cape of Good Hope.

Some time before the expedition of Diaz, the river Zaire and the kingdom of Congo had been discovered by Diego Can, who found a nation of negroes who spoke a language which those that were in his ships could not understand. He landed, and the natives, whom he expected to fly, like the other inhabitants of the coast, met them with confidence, and treated them with kindness; but Diego, finding that they could not understand each other, seized some of their chiefs, and carried them to Portugal, leaving some of his own people in their room to learn the language of Congo.

The negroes were soon pacified, and the Portuguese left to their mercy were well treated; and, as they by degrees grew able to make themselves understood, recommended themselves, their nation,

and their religion. The king of Portugal sent Diego back in a very short time with the negroes whom he had forced away; and when they were set safe on shore, the king of Congo conceived so much esteem for Diego, that he sent one of those, who had returned, back again in the ship to Lisbon, with two young men despatched as ambassadors, to desire instructers to be sent for the conversion of his kingdom.

The ambassadors were honourably received, and baptized with great pomp, and a fleet was immediately fitted out for Congo, under the command of Gonsalvo Sorza, who dying in his passage, was succeeded in authority by his nephew, Roderigo.

When they came to land, the king's uncle, who commanded the province, immediately requested to be solemnly initiated into the Christian religion, which was granted to him and his young son, on Easter day, 1491. The father was named Manuel, and the son Antonio. Soon afterwards the king, queen, and eldest prince, received at the font the names of John, Eleanor, and Alphonso; and a war breaking out, the whole army was admitted to the rites of Christianity, and then sent against the enemy. They returned victorious, but soon forgot their faith, and formed a conspiracy to restore paganism; a powerful opposition was raised by infidels and apostates, headed by one of the king's younger sons; and the missionaries had been destroyed, had not Alphonso pleaded for them and for Christianity.

The enemies of religion now became the enemies of Alphonso, whom they accused to his father of disloyalty. His mother, queen Eleanor, gained time by one artifice after another, till the king was calmed; he then heard the cause again, declared his son innocent, and punished his accusers with death.

The king died soon after, and the throne was disputed by Alphonso, supported by the Christians, and Aquitimo his brother, followed by the infidels. A battle was fought, Aquitimo was taken and put to death, and Christianity was for a time established in Congo; but the nation has relapsed into its former follies.

Such was the state of the Portuguese navigation, when, in 1492, Columbus made the daring and prosperous voyage, which gave a new world to European curiosity and European cruelty. He had offered his proposal, and declared his expectations to king John of Portugal, who had slighted him as a fanciful and rash projector, that promised what he had not reasonable hopes to perform. Columbus had solicited other princes, and had been repulsed with the same indignity; at last, Isabella of Arragon furnished him with ships, and having found America, he entered the mouth of the Tagus in his return, and showed the natives of the new country. When he was admitted to the king's presence, he acted and talked with so much haughtiness, and reflected on the neglect which he had undergone with so much acrimony, that the courtiers, who saw their prince insulted, offered to destroy him; but

the king, who knew that he deserved the reproaches that had been used, and who now sincerely regretted his incredulity, would suffer no violence to be offered him, but dismissed him with presents and with honours.

The Portuguese and Spaniards became now jealous of each other's claim to countries which neither had yet seen; and the pope, to whom they appealed, divided the new world between them by a line drawn from north to south, a hundred leagues westward from cape Verd and the Azores, giving all that lies west from that line to the Spaniards, and all that lies east to the Portuguese. This was no satisfactory division, for the east and west must meet at last, but that time was then at a great distance.

According to this grant, the Portuguese continued their discoveries eastward, and became masters of much of the coast both of Africa and the Indies; but they seized much more than they could occupy, and while they were under the dominion of Spain, lost the greater part of their Indian territories.

THE PREFACE TO THE PRECEPTOR

CONTAINING A GENERAL PLAN OF EDUCATION[p]

THE importance of the education is a point so generally understood and confessed, that it would be of little use to attempt any new proof or illustration of its necessity and advantages.

At a time, when so many schemes of education have been projected, so many proposals offered to the publick, so many schools opened for general knowledge, and so many lectures in particular sciences attended; at a time when mankind seems intent rather upon familiarizing than enlarging the several arts; and every age, sex, and profession, is invited to an acquaintance with those studies, which were formerly supposed accessible only to such as had devoted themselves to literary leisure, and dedicated their powers to philosophical inquiries; it seems rather requisite that an apology should be made for any further attempt to smooth a path so frequently beaten, or to recommend attainments so ardently pursued, and so officiously directed.

That this general desire may not be frustrated, our schools seem yet to want some book, which may excite curiosity by its variety, encourage diligence by its facility, and reward application by its usefulness. In examining the treatises, hitherto offered to the youth of this nation, there appeared none that did not fail in one or other of these essen-

[p] In this year, 1748, Mr. Dodsley brought out his Preceptor, one of the most valuable books for the improvement of young minds, that has appeared in any language; and to this meritorious work Johnson furnished the preface. Boswell's Life of Johnson, i.

tial qualities; none that were not either unpleasing, or abstruse, or crowded with learning very rarely applicable to the purposes of common life.

Every man, who has been engaged in teaching, knows with how much difficulty youthful minds are confined to close application, and how readily they deviate to any thing, rather than attend to that which is imposed as a task. That this disposition, when it becomes inconsistent with the forms of education, is to be checked, will readily be granted; but since, though it may be in some degree obviated, it cannot wholly be suppressed, it is surely rational to turn it to advantage, by taking care that the mind shall never want objects on which its faculties may be usefully employed. It is not impossible, that this restless desire of novelty, which gives so much trouble to the teacher, may be often the struggle of the understanding starting from that to which it is not by nature adapted, and travelling in search of something on which it may fix with greater satisfaction. For, without supposing each man particularly marked out by his genius for particular performances, it may be easily conceived, that when a numerous class of boys is confined indiscriminately to the same forms of composition, the repetition of the same words, or the explication of the same sentiments, the employment must, either by nature or accident, be less suitable to some than others; that the ideas to be contemplated may be too difficult for the apprehension of one, and too obvious for that of another: they may be such as some under-

standings cannot reach, though others look down upon them, as below their regard. Every mind, in its progress through the different stages of scholastick learning, must be often in one of these conditions; must either flag with the labour, or grow wanton with the facility of the work assigned; and in either state it naturally turns aside from the track before it. Weariness looks out for relief, and leisure for employment, and, surely, it is rational to indulge the wanderings of both. For the faculties which are too lightly burdened with the business of the day, may, with great propriety, add to it some other inquiry; and he that finds himself overwearied by a task, which, perhaps, with all his efforts, he is not able to perform, is undoubtedly to be justified in addicting himself rather to easier studies, and endeavouring to quit that which is above his attainment, for that which nature has not made him incapable of pursuing with advantage.

That, therefore, this roving curiosity may not be unsatisfied, it seems necessary to scatter in its way such allurements as may withhold it from an useless and unbounded dissipation; such as may regulate it without violence, and direct it without restraint; such as may suit every inclination, and fit every capacity; may employ the stronger genius, by operations of reason, and engage the less active or forcible mind, by supplying it with easy knowledge, and obviating that despondence, which quickly prevails, when nothing appears but a succession of dif-

ficulties, and one labour only ceases that another may be imposed.

A book, intended thus to correspond with all dispositions, and afford entertainment for minds of different powers, is necessarily to contain treatises on different subjects. As it is designed for schools, though for the higher classes, it is confined wholly to such parts of knowledge as young minds may comprehend; and, as it is drawn up for readers yet unexperienced in life, and unable to distinguish the useful from the ostentatious or unnecessary parts of science, it is requisite that a very nice distinction should be made, that nothing unprofitable should be admitted for the sake of pleasure, nor any arts of attraction neglected, that might fix the attention upon more important studies.

These considerations produced the book which is here offered to the publick, as better adapted to the great design of pleasing by instruction, than any which has hitherto been admitted into our seminaries of literature. There are not indeed wanting in the world compendiums of science, but many were written at a time when philosophy was imperfect, as that of G. Valla; many contain only naked schemes, or synoptical tables, as that of Stierius; and others are too large and voluminous, as that of Alstedius; and, what is not to be considered as the least objection, they are generally in a language, which, to boys, is more difficult than the subject; and it is too hard a task to be condemned to learn a new science in an unknown tongue. As in life, so

in study, it is dangerous to do more things than one at a time; and the mind is not to be harassed with unnecessary obstructions, in a way, of which the natural and unavoidable asperity is such as too frequently produces despair.

If the language, however, had been the only objection to any of the volumes already extant, the schools might have been supplied at a small expense by a translation; but none could be found that was not so defective, redundant, or erroneous, as to be of more danger than use. It was necessary then to examine, whether upon every single science there was not some treatise written for the use of scholars, which might be adapted to this design, so that a collection might be made from different authors, without the necessity of writing new systems. This search was not wholly without success; for two authors were found, whose performances might be admitted with little alteration. But so widely does this plan differ from all others, so much has the state of many kinds of learning been changed, or so unfortunately have they hitherto been cultivated, that none of the other subjects were explained in such a manner as was now required; and, therefore, neither care nor expense has been spared to obtain new lights, and procure to this book the merit of an original.

With what judgment the design has been formed, and with what skill it has been executed, the learned world is now to determine. But before sentence shall pass, it is proper to explain more fully what has

been intended, that censure may not be incurred by the omission of that which the original plan did not comprehend; to declare more particularly who they are to whose instructions these treatises pretend, that a charge of arrogance and presumption may be obviated; to lay down the reasons which directed the choice of the several subjects; and to explain more minutely the manner in which each particular part of these volumes is to be used.

The title has already declared, that these volumes are particularly intended for the use of schools, and, therefore, it has been the care of the authors to explain the several sciences, of which they have treated, in the most familiar manner; for the mind, used only to common expressions, and inaccurate ideas, does not suddenly conform itself to scholastick modes of reasoning, or conceive the nice distinctions of a subtile philosophy, and may be properly initiated in speculative studies by an introduction like this, in which the grossness of vulgar conception is avoided, without the observation of metaphysical exactness. It is observed, that in the course of the natural world no change is instantaneous, but all its vicissitudes are gradual and slow; the motions of intellect proceed in the like imperceptible progression, and proper degrees of transition from one study to another are, therefore, necessary; but let it not be charged upon the writers of this book, that they intended to exhibit more than the dawn of knowledge, or pretended to raise in the mind any nobler

product than the blossoms of science, which more powerful institutions may ripen into fruit.

For this reason it must not be expected, that in the following pages should be found a complete circle of the sciences; or that any authors, now deservedly esteemed, should be rejected to make way for what is here offered. It was intended by the means of these precepts, not to deck the mind with ornaments, but to protect it from nakedness; not to enrich it with affluence, but to supply it with necessaries. The inquiry, therefore, was not what degrees of knowledge are desirable, but what are in most stations of life indispensably required; and the choice was determined, not by the splendour of any part of literature, but by the extent of its use, and the inconvenience which its neglect was likely to produce.

1. The prevalence of this consideration appears in the first part, which is appropriated to the humble purposes of teaching to read, and speak, and write letters; an attempt of little magnificence, but in which no man needs to blush for having employed his time, if honour be estimated by use. For precepts of this kind, however neglected, extend their importance as far as men are found who communicate their thoughts one to another; they are equally useful to the highest and the lowest; they may often contribute to make ignorance less inelegant; and may it not be observed, that they are frequently wanted for the embellishment even of learning?

In order to show the proper use of this part,

which consists of various exemplifications of such differences of style as require correspondent diversities of pronunciation, it will be proper to inform the scholar, that there are, in general, three forms of style, each of which demands its particular mode of elocution: the familiar, the solemn, and the pathetick. That in the familiar, he that reads is only to talk with a paper in his hand, and to indulge himself in all the lighter liberties of voice, as when he reads the common articles of a newspaper, or a cursory letter of intelligence or business. That the solemn style, such as that of a serious narrative, exacts an uniform steadiness of speech, equal, clear, and calm. That for the pathetick, such as an animated oration, it is necessary the voice be regulated by the sense, varying and rising with the passions. These rules, which are the most general, admit a great number of subordinate observations, which must be particularly adapted to every scholar; for it is observable, that though very few read well, yet every man errs in a different way. But let one remark never be omitted: inculcate strongly to every scholar the danger of copying the voice of another; an attempt which, though it has been often repeated, is always unsuccessful.

The importance of writing letters with propriety, justly claims to be considered with care, since, next to the power of pleasing with his presence, every man would wish to be able to give delight at a distance. This great art should be diligently taught, the rather, because of those letters which are most

useful, and by which the general business of life is transacted, there are no examples easily to be found. It seems the general fault of those who undertake this part of education, that they propose for the exercise of their scholars, occasions which rarely happen; such as congratulations and condolences, and neglect those without which life cannot proceed. It is possible to pass many years without the necessity of writing panegyricks or epithalamiums; but every man has frequent occasion to state a contract, or demand a debt, or make a narrative of some minute incidents of common life. On these subjects, therefore, young persons should be taught to think justly, and write clearly, neatly, and succinctly, lest they come from school into the world without any acquaintance with common affairs, and stand idle spectators of mankind, in expectation that some great event will give them an opportunity to exert their rhetorick.

2. The second place is assigned to geometry; on the usefulness of which it is unnecessary to expatiate in an age when mathematical studies have so much engaged the attention of all classes of men. This treatise is one of those which have been borrowed, being a translation from the work of Mr. Le Clerc; and is not intended as more than the first initiation. In delivering the fundamental principles of geometry, it is necessary to proceed by slow steps, that each proposition may be fully understood before another is attempted. For which purpose it is not sufficient, that when a question is asked in the words of the

book, the scholar, likewise, can in the words of the book return the proper answer; for this may be only an act of memory, not of understanding: it is always proper to vary the words of the question, to place the proposition in different points of view, and to require of the learner an explanation in his own terms, informing him, however, when they are improper. By this method the scholar will become cautious and attentive, and the master will know with certainty the degree of his proficiency. Yet, though this rule is generally right, I cannot but recommend a precept of Pardie's[q], that when the student cannot be made to comprehend some particular part, it should be, for that time, laid aside, till new light shall arise from subsequent observation.

When this compendium is completely understood, the scholar may proceed to the perusal of Tacquet, afterwards of Euclid himself, and then of the modern improvers of geometry, such as Barrow, Keil, and Sir Isaac Newton.

3. The necessity of some acquaintance with geography and astronomy will not be disputed. If the pupil is born to the ease of a large fortune, no part of learning is more necessary to him than the knowledge of the situation of nations, on which their interests generally depend; if he is dedicated to any

[q] "And albeit the reader shall not at any one day (do what he can) reach to the meaning of our author, or of our commentaries, yet let him not discourage himself, but proceed; for, on some other day, in some other place, that doubt will be cleared." This is the advice of Lord Coke to the student bewildered in the mazes of legal investigation. Preface to the first Institute.

of the learned professions, it is scarcely possible that he will not be obliged to apply himself, in some part of his life, to these studies, as no other branch of literature can be fully comprehended without them; if he is designed for the arts of commerce or agriculture, some general acquaintance with these sciences will be found extremely useful to him; in a word, no studies afford more extensive, more wonderful, or more pleasing scenes; and, therefore, there can be no ideas impressed upon the soul, which can more conduce to its future entertainment.

In the pursuit of these sciences, it will be proper to proceed with the same gradation and caution as in geometry. And it is always of use to decorate the nakedness of science, by interspersing such observations and narratives as may amuse the mind, and excite curiosity. Thus, in explaining the state of the polar regions, it might be fit to read the narrative of the Englishmen that wintered in Greenland, which will make young minds sufficiently curious after the cause of such a length of night, and intenseness of cold; and many stratagems of the same kind might be practised to interest them in all parts of their studies, and call in their passions to animate their inquiries. When they have read this treatise, it will be proper to recommend to them Varenius's Geography, and Ferguson's Astronomy.

4. The study of chronology and history seems to be one of the most natural delights of the human mind. It is not easy to live, without inquiring by what means every thing was brought into the state

in which we now behold it, or without finding in the mind some desire of being informed, concerning the generations of mankind that have been in possession of the world before us, whether they were better or worse than ourselves; or what good or evil has been derived to us from their schemes, practices, and institutions. These are inquiries which history alone can satisfy; and history can only be made intelligible by some knowledge of chronology, the science by which events are ranged in their order, and the periods of computation are settled; and which, therefore, assists the memory by method, and enlightens the judgment by showing the dependence of one transaction on another. Accordingly it should be diligently inculcated to the scholar, that, unless he fixes in his mind some idea of the time in which each man of eminence lived, and each action was performed, with some part of the contemporary history of the rest of the world, he will consume his life in useless reading, and darken his mind with a crowd of unconnected events; his memory will be perplexed with distant transactions resembling one another, and his reflections be like a dream in a fever, busy and turbulent, but confused and indistinct.

The technical part of chronology, or the art of computing and adjusting time, as it is very difficult, so it is not of absolute necessity, but should, however, be taught, so far as it can be learned without the loss of those hours which are required for attainments of nearer concern. The student may join with this treatise Le Clerc's Compendium of History;

and afterwards may, for the historical part of chronology, procure Helvicus's and Isaacson's Tables; and, if he is desirous of attaining the technical part, may first peruse Holder's Account of Time, Hearne's Ductor Historicus, Strauchius, the first part of Petavius's Rationarium Temporum; and, at length, Scaliger de Emendatione Temporum. And, for instruction in the method of his historical studies, he may consult Hearne's Ductor Historicus, Wheare's Lectures, Rawlinson's Directions for the Study of History; and, for ecclesiastical history, Cave and Dupin, Baronius and Fleury.

5. Rhetorick and poetry supply life with its highest intellectual pleasures; and, in the hands of virtue, are of great use for the impression of just sentiments, and recommendation of illustrious examples. In the practice of these great arts, so much more is the effect of nature than the effect of education, that nothing is attempted here but to teach the mind some general heads of observation, to which the beautiful passages of the best writers may commonly be reduced. In the use of this, it is not proper that the teacher should confine himself to the examples before him; for, by that method, he will never enable his pupils to make just application of the rules; but, having inculcated the true meaning of each figure, he should require them to exemplify it by their own observations, pointing to them the poem, or, in longer works, the book or canto in which an example may be found, and leaving them to discover

the particular passage, by the light of the rules which they have lately learned.

For a farther progress in these studies, they may consult Quintilian, and Vossius's Rhetorick; the art of poetry will be best learned from Bossu and Bohours in French, together with Dryden's Essays and Prefaces, the critical Papers of Addison, Spence on Pope's Odyssey, and Trapp's Prælectiones Poeticæ: but a more accurate and philosophical account is expected from a commentary upon Aristotle's Art of Poetry, with which the literature of this nation will be, in a short time, augmented.

6. With regard to the practice of drawing, it is not necessary to give any directions, the use of the treatise being only to teach the proper method of imitating the figures which are annexed. It will be proper to incite the scholars to industry, by showing in other books the use of the art, and informing them how much it assists the apprehension, and relieves the memory; and if they are obliged sometimes to write descriptions of engines, utensils, or any complex pieces of workmanship, they will more fully apprehend the necessity of an expedient which so happily supplies the defects of language, and enables the eye to conceive what cannot be conveyed to the mind any other way. When they have read this treatise, and practised upon these figures, their theory may be improved by the Jesuit's Perspective, and their manual operations by other figures which may be easily procured.

7. Logick, or the art of arranging and connecting

ideas, of forming and examining arguments, is universally allowed to be an attainment, in the utmost degree, worthy the ambition of that being whose highest honour is to be endued with reason; but it is doubted whether that ambition has yet been gratified, and whether the powers of ratiocination have been much improved by any systems of art, or methodical institutions. The logick, which for so many ages kept possession of the schools, has at last been condemned as a mere art of wrangling, of very little use in the pursuit of truth; and later writers have contented themselves with giving an account of the operations of the mind, marking the various stages of her progress, and giving some general rules for the regulation of her conduct. The method of these writers is here followed; but without a servile adherence to any, and with endeavours to make improvements upon all. This work, however laborious, has yet been fruitless, if there be truth in an observation very frequently made, that logicians out of the school do not reason better than men unassisted by those lights which their science is supposed to bestow. It is not to be doubted but that logicians may be sometimes overborne by their passions, or blinded by their prejudices; and that a man may reason ill, as he may act ill, not because he does not know what is right, but because he does not regard it; yet it is no more the fault of his art that it does not direct him, when his attention is withdrawn from it, than it is the defect of his sight that he

misses his way, when he shuts his eyes. Against this cause of errour there is no provision to be made, otherwise than by inculcating the value of truth, and the necessity of conquering the passions. But logick may, likewise, fail to produce its effects upon common occasions, for want of being frequently and familiarly applied, till its precepts may direct the mind imperceptibly, as the fingers of a musician are regulated by his knowledge of the tune. This readiness of recollection is only to be procured by frequent impression; and, therefore, it will be proper, when logick has been once learned, the teacher take frequent occasion, in the most easy and familiar conversation, to observe when its rules are preserved, and when they are broken; and that afterwards he read no authors, without exacting of his pupil an account of every remarkable exemplification or breach of the laws of reasoning.

When this system has been digested, if it be thought necessary to proceed farther in the study of method, it will be proper to recommend Crousaz, Watts, Le Clerc, Wolfius, and Locke's Essay on Human Understanding; and if there be imagined any necessity of adding the peripatetick logick, which has been, perhaps, condemned without a candid trial, it will be convenient to proceed to Sanderson, Wallis, Crackanthorp, and Aristotle.

8. To excite a curiosity after the works of God, is the chief design of the small specimen of natural history inserted in this collection; which, however, may be sufficient to put the mind in motion, and in

some measure to direct its steps; but its effects may easily be improved by a philosophick master, who will every day find a thousand opportunities of turning the attention of his scholars to the contemplation of the objects that surround them, of laying open the wonderful art with which every part of the universe is formed, and the providence which governs the vegetable and animal creation. He may lay before them the Religious Philosopher, Ray, Derham's Physico-Theology, together with the Spectacle de la Nature; and in time recommend to their perusal Rondoletius, Aldrovandus, and Linnæus.

9. But how much soever the reason may be strengthened by logick, or the conceptions of the mind enlarged by the study of nature, it is necessary the man be not suffered to dwell upon them so long as to neglect the study of himself, the knowledge of his own station in the ranks of being, and his various relations to the innumerable multitudes which surround him, and with which his Maker has ordained him to be united for the reception and communication of happiness. To consider these aright is of the greatest importance, since from these arise duties which he cannot neglect. Ethicks, or morality, therefore, is one of the studies which ought to begin with the first glimpse of reason, and only end with life itself. Other acquisitions are merely temporary benefits, except as they contribute to illustrate the knowledge, and confirm the practice of morality and piety, which extend their influence

beyond the grave, and increase our happiness through endless duration.

This great science, therefore, must be inculcated with care and assiduity, such as its importance ought to incite in reasonable minds; and for the prosecution of this design, fit opportunities are always at hand. As the importance of logick is to be shown by detecting false arguments, the excellence of morality is to be displayed by proving the deformity, the reproach, and the misery of all deviations from it. Yet it is to be remembered, that the laws of mere morality are of no coercive power; and, however they may, by conviction, of their fitness please the reasoner in the shade, when the passions stagnate without impulse, and the appetites are secluded from their objects, they will be of little force against the ardour of desire, or the vehemence of rage, amidst the pleasures and tumults of the world. To counteract the power of temptations, hope must be excited by the prospect of rewards, and fear by the expectation of punishment; and virtue may owe her panegyricks to morality, but must derive her authority from religion.

When, therefore, the obligations of morality are taught, let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten; by which it will be shown that they give strength and lustre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reason, and morality the will of God. Under this article must be recommended Tully's Offices, Grotius, Puffendorf, Cumberland's

Laws of Nature, and the excellent Mr. Addison's Moral and Religious Essays.

10. Thus far the work is composed for the use of scholars, merely as they are men. But it was thought necessary to introduce something that might be particularly adapted to that country for which it is designed; and, therefore, a discourse has been added upon trade and commerce, of which it becomes every man of this nation to understand, at least, the general principles, as it is impossible that any should be high or low enough not to be, in some degree, affected by their declension or prosperity. It is, therefore, necessary that it should be universally known among us, what changes of property are advantageous, or when the balance of trade is on our side; what are the products or manufactures of other countries; and how far one nation may in any species of traffick obtain or preserve superiority over another. The theory of trade is yet but little understood, and, therefore, the practice is often without real advantage to the publick; but it might be carried on with more general success, if its principles were better considered; and to excite that attention is our chief design. To the perusal of this part of our work may succeed that of Mun upon Foreign Trade, Sir Josiah Child, Locke upon Coin, Davenant's Treatises, the British Merchant, Dictionnaire de Commerce, and, for an abstract or compendium, Gee, and an improvement that may, hereafter, be made upon his plan.

11. The principles of laws and government come

next to be considered; by which men are taught to whom obedience is due, for what it is paid, and in what degree it may be justly required. This knowledge, by peculiar necessity, constitutes a part of the education of an Englishman, who professes to obey his prince, according to the law, and who is himself a secondary legislator, as he gives his consent, by his representative, to all the laws by which he is bound, and has a right to petition the great council of the nation, whenever he thinks they are deliberating upon an act detrimental to the interest of the community. This is, therefore, a subject to which the thoughts of a young man ought to be directed; and, that he may obtain such knowledge as may qualify him to act and judge as one of a free people, let him be directed to add to this introduction Fortescue's Treatises, N. Bacon's Historical Discourse on the Laws and Government of England, Blackstone's Commentaries, Temple's Introduction, Locke on Government, Zouch's Elementa Juris Civilis, Plato Redivivus, Gurdon's History of Parliaments, and Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.

12. Having thus supplied the young student with knowledge, it remains now that he learn its application; and that thus qualified to act his part, he be at last taught to choose it. For this purpose a section is added upon human life and manners; in which he is cautioned against the danger of indulging his passions, of vitiating his habits, and depraving his sentiments. He is instructed in these points by three fables, two of which were of the highest

authority in the ancient pagan world. But at this he is not to rest; for, if he expects to be wise and happy, he must diligently study the Scriptures of God.

Such is the book now proposed, as the first initiation into the knowledge of things, which has been thought by many to be too long delayed in the present forms of education. Whether the complaints be not often ill-grounded, may, perhaps, be disputed; but it is at least reasonable to believe, that greater proficiency might sometimes be made; that real knowledge might be more early communicated; and that children might be allowed, without injury to health, to spend many of those hours upon useful employments, which are generally lost in idleness and play; therefore the publick will surely encourage an experiment, by which, if it fails, nobody is hurt; and, if it succeeds, all the future ages of the world may find advantage; which may eradicate or prevent vice, by turning to a better use those moments in which it is learned or indulged; and in some sense lengthen life, by teaching posterity to enjoy those years which have hitherto been lost. The success, and even the trial of this experiment, will depend upon those to whom the care of our youth is committed; and a due sense of the importance of their trust will easily prevail upon them to encourage a work which pursues the design of improving education. If any part of the following performance shall, upon trial, be found capable of amendment; if any thing can be

added or altered, so as to render the attainment of knowledge more easy; the editor will be extremely obliged to any gentleman, particularly those who are engaged in the business of teaching, for such hints or observations as may tend towards the improvement, and will spare neither expense nor trouble in making the best use of their information.

PREFACE TO ROLT'S DICTIONARY[r]

NO expectation is more fallacious than that which authors form of the reception which their labours will find among mankind. Scarcely any man publishes a book, whatever it be, without believing that he has caught the moment when the publick attention is vacant to his call, and the world is disposed, in a particular manner, to learn the art which he undertakes to teach.

The writers of this volume are not so far exempt from epidemical prejudices, but that they, likewise, please themselves with imagining that they have reserved their labours to a propitious conjuncture, and that this is the proper time for the publication of a dictionary of commerce.

The predictions of an author are very far from infallibility; but, in justification of some degree of confidence, it may be properly observed, that there was never, from the earliest ages, a time in which trade so much engaged the attention of mankind, or commercial gain was sought with such general emulation. Nations which have hitherto cultivated no art but that of war, nor conceived any means of increasing riches but by plunder, are awakened to more inoffensive industry. Those whom the possession of subterraneous treasures have long disposed to accommodate themselves by foreign industry, are at last convinced that idleness never will be

[r] A new Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, compiled from the information of the most eminent merchants, and from the works of the best writers on commercial subjects in all languages, by Mr. Rolt. Folio, 1757.

rich. The merchant is now invited to every port; manufactures are established in all cities; and princes, who just can view the sea from some single corner of their dominions, are enlarging harbours, erecting mercantile companies, and preparing to traffick in the remotest countries.

Nor is the form of this work less popular than the subject. It has lately been the practice of the learned to range knowledge by the alphabet, and publish dictionaries of every kind of literature. This practice has, perhaps, been carried too far by the force of fashion. Sciences, in themselves systematical and coherent, are not very properly broken into such fortuitous distributions. A dictionary of arithmetick or geometry can serve only to confound; but commerce, considered in its whole extent, seems to refuse any other method of arrangement, as it comprises innumerable particulars unconnected with each other, among which there is no reason why any should be first or last, better than is furnished by the letters that compose their names.

We cannot, indeed, boast ourselves the inventors of a scheme so commodious and comprehensive. The French, among innumerable projects for the promotion of traffick, have taken care to supply their merchants with a Dictionnaire de Commerce, collected with great industry and exactness, but too large for common use, and adapted to their own trade. This book, as well as others, has been carefully consulted, that our merchants may not be

ignorant of any thing known by their enemies or rivals.

Such, indeed, is the extent of our undertaking, that it was necessary to solicit every information, to consult the living and the dead. The great qualification of him that attempts a work thus general is diligence of inquiry. No man has opportunity or ability to acquaint himself with all the subjects of a commercial dictionary, so as to describe from his own knowledge, or assert on his own experience. He must, therefore, often depend upon the veracity of others, as every man depends in common life, and have no other skill to boast than that of selecting judiciously, and arranging properly.

But to him who considers the extent of our subject, limited only by the bounds of nature and of art, the task of selection and method will appear sufficient to overburden industry and distract attention. Many branches of commerce are subdivided into smaller and smaller parts, till, at last, they become so minute, as not easily to be noted by observation. Many interests are so woven among each other, as not to be disentangled without long inquiry; many arts are industriously kept secret, and many practices, necessary to be known, are carried on in parts too remote for intelligence.

But the knowledge of trade is of so much importance to a maritime nation, that no labour can be thought great by which information may be obtained; and, therefore, we hope the reader will not

have reason to complain, that, of what he might justly expect to find, any thing is omitted.

To give a detail or analysis of our work is very difficult; a volume intended to contain whatever is requisite to be known by every trader, necessarily becomes so miscellaneous and unconnected, as not to be easily reducible to heads; yet, since we pretend in some measure to treat of traffick as a science, and to make that regular and systematical which has hitherto been, to a great degree, fortuitous and conjectural, and has often succeeded by chance rather than by conduct, it will be proper to show that a distribution of parts has been attempted, which, though rude and inadequate, will, at least, preserve some order, and enable the mind to take a methodical and successive view of this design.

In the dictionary which we here offer to the publick, we propose to exhibit the materials, the places, and the means of traffick.

The materials or subjects of traffick are whatever is bought and sold, and include, therefore, every manufacture of art, and almost every production of nature.

In giving an account of the commodities of nature, whether those which are to be used in their original state, as drugs and spices, or those which become useful when they receive a new form from human art, as flax, cotton, and metals, we shall show the places of their production, the manner in which they grow, the art of cultivating or collecting them,

their discriminations and varieties, by which the best sorts are known from the worse, and genuine from fictitious, the arts by which they are counterfeited, the casualties by which they are impaired, and the practices by which the damage is palliated or concealed. We shall, likewise, show their virtues and uses, and trace them through all the changes which they undergo.

The history of manufactures is, likewise, delivered. Of every artificial commodity the manner in which it is made is, in some measure, described, though it must be remembered, that manual operations are scarce to be conveyed by any words to him that has not seen them. Some general notions may, however, be afforded: it is easy to comprehend, that plates of iron are formed by the pressure of rollers, and bars by the strokes of a hammer; that a cannon is cast, and that an anvil is forged. But, as it is to most traders of more use to know when their goods are well wrought, than by what means, care has been taken to name the places where every manufacture has been carried furthest, and the marks by which its excellency may be ascertained.

By the places of trade, are understood all ports, cities, or towns, where staples are established, manufactures are wrought, or any commodities are bought and sold advantageously. This part of our work includes an enumeration of almost all the remarkable places in the world, with such an account of their situation, customs, and products, as the

merchant would require, who, being to begin a new trade in any foreign country, was yet ignorant of the commodities of the place, and the manners of the inhabitants.

But the chief attention of the merchant, and, consequently, of the author who writes for merchants, ought to be employed upon the means of trade, which include all the knowledge and practice necessary to the skilful and successful conduct of commerce.

The first of the means of trade is proper education, which may confer a competent skill in numbers; to be afterwards completed in the counting-house, by observation of the manner of stating accounts, and regulating books, which is one of the few arts which, having been studied in proportion to its importance, is carried as far as use can require. The counting-house of an accomplished merchant is a school of method, where the great science may be learned of ranging particulars under generals, of bringing the different parts of a transaction together, and of showing, at one view, a long series of dealing and exchange. Let no man venture into large business while he is ignorant of the method of regulating books; never let him imagine that any degree of natural abilities will enable him to supply this deficiency, or preserve multiplicity of affairs from inextricable confusion.

This is the study, without which all other studies will be of little avail; but this alone is not sufficient. It will be necessary to learn many other things,

which, however, may be easily included in the preparatory institutions, such as an exact knowledge of the weights and measures of different countries, and some skill in geography and navigation, with which this book may, perhaps, sufficiently supply him.

In navigation, considered as part of the skill of a merchant, is included not so much the art of steering a ship, as the knowledge of the seacoast, and of the different parts to which his cargoes are sent; the customs to be paid; the passes, permissions, or certificates to be procured; the hazards of every voyage, and the true rate of insurance. To this must be added, an acquaintance with the policies and arts of other nations, as well those to whom the commodities are sold, as of those who carry goods of the same kind to the same market; and who are, therefore, to be watched as rivals endeavouring to take advantage of every errour, miscarriage, or debate.

The chief of the means of trade is money, of which our late refinements in traffick have made the knowledge extremely difficult. The merchant must not only inform himself of the various denominations and value of foreign coins, together with their method of counting and reducing; such as the milleries of Portugal, and the livres of France; but he must learn what is of more difficult attainment; the discount of exchanges, the nature of current paper, the principles upon which the several banks of Europe are established, the real value of funds,

the true credit of trading companies, with all the sources of profit, and possibilities of loss.

All this he must learn, merely as a private dealer, attentive only to his own advantage; but, as every man ought to consider himself as part of the community to which he belongs, and while he prosecutes his own interest to promote, likewise, that of his country, it is necessary for the trader to look abroad upon mankind, and study many questions which are, perhaps, more properly political than mercantile.

He ought, therefore, to consider very accurately the balance of trade, or the proportion between things exported and imported; to examine what kinds of commerce are unlawful, either as being expressly prohibited, because detrimental to the manufactures or other interest of his country, as the exportation of silver to the East-Indies, and the introduction of French commodities; or unlawful in itself, as the traffick for negroes. He ought to be able to state with accuracy the benefits and mischiefs of monopolies, and exclusive companies; to inquire into the arts which have been practised by them to make themselves necessary, or by their opponents to make them odious. He should inform himself what trades are declining, and what are improvable; when the advantage is on our side, and when on that of our rivals.

The state of our colonies is always to be diligently surveyed, that no advantage may be lost which they can afford, and that every opportunity may be im-

proved of increasing their wealth and power, or of making them useful to their mother country.

There is no knowledge of more frequent use than that of duties and impost, whether customs paid at the ports, or excises levied upon the manufacturer. Much of the prosperity of a trading nation depends upon duties properly apportioned; so that what is necessary may continue cheap, and what is of use only to luxury may, in some measure, atone to the publick for the mischief done to individuals. Duties may often be so regulated as to become useful even to those that pay them; and they may be, likewise, so unequally imposed as to discourage honesty, and depress industry, and give temptation to fraud and unlawful practices.

To teach all this is the design of the Commercial Dictionary; which, though immediately and primarily written for the merchants, will be of use to every man of business or curiosity. There is no man who is not, in some degree, a merchant, who has not something to buy and something to sell, and who does not, therefore, want such instructions as may teach him the true value of possessions or commodities.

The descriptions of the productions of the earth and water, which this volume will contain, may be equally pleasing and useful to the speculatist with any other natural history; and the accounts of various manufactures will constitute no contemptible body of experimental philosophy. The descriptions of ports and cities may instruct the geographer, as

well as if they were found in books appropriated only to his own science; and the doctrines of funds, insurances, currency, monopolies, exchanges, and duties, is so necessary to the politician, that without it he can be of no use either in the council or the senate, nor can speak or think justly either on war or trade.

We, therefore, hope that we shall not repent the labour of compiling this work; nor flatter ourselves unreasonably, in predicting a favourable reception to a book which no condition of life can render useless, which may contribute to the advantage of all that make or receive laws, of all that buy or sell, of all that wish to keep or improve their possessions, of all that desire to be rich, and all that desire to be wise[s].

[s] Of this preface, Mr. Boswell informs us that Dr. Johnson said he never saw Rolt, and never read the book. "The booksellers wanted a preface to a dictionary of trade and commerce. I knew very well what such a dictionary should be, and I wrote a preface accordingly." This may be believed; but the book is a most wretched farrago of articles plundered without acknowledgment, or judgment, which, indeed, was the case with most of Rolt's compilations.

FATHER LOBO'S VOYAGE TO ABYSSINIA[t]

PREFACE TO TRANSLATION

THE following relation is so curious and entertaining, and the dissertations that accompany it so judicious and instructive, that the translator is confident his attempt stands in need of no apology, whatever censures may fall on the performance.

The Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general vein of his countrymen, has amused his reader with no romantick absurdities or incredible fictions: whatever he relates, whether true or not, is at least probable; and he who tells nothing exceeding the bounds of probability, has a right to demand that they should believe him who cannot contradict him.

He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them, to have copied nature from the life, and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no

[t] This translation was Johnson's first literary production, and was published in 1735, with London on the title page, though, according to Boswell, it was printed at Birmingham. In the preface and dedication, the elegant structure of the sentences, and the harmony of their cadence, are such as characterize his maturer works. Here we may adopt the words of Mr. Murphy, and affirm that "we see the infant Hercules." In the merely translated parts, no vestige of the translator's own style appears. For Burke's opinion on the work, see Boswell's Life of Johnson, i.; and for Johnson's own, see Boswell, iii. In Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson, there is a compendious account of the benevolent travels of the Portuguese missionary, who may fairly be called the precursor of Bruce. Independent of its intrinsic merits, this translation is interesting as illustrative of Johnson's early fondness for voyages and travels; the perusal of which, refreshed Gray when weary of heavier labours, and were pronounced by Warburton to constitute an important part of a philosopher's library.— Ed.

basilisks that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants.

The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blest with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations here described either devoid of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues: here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences: he will discover what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced in most countries their particular inconveniencies by particular favours.

In his account of the mission, where his veracity is most to be suspected, he neither exaggerates overmuch the merits of the Jesuits, if we consider the partial regard paid by the Portuguese to their countrymen, by the Jesuits to their society, and by the papists to their church; nor aggravates the vices of the Abyssinians; but if the reader will not be satisfied with a popish account of a popish mission, he may have recourse to the history of the church of Abyssinia, written by Dr. Geddes, in which he will find the actions and sufferings of the mission-

aries placed in a different light, though the same in which Mr. Le Grand, with all his zeal for the Roman church, appears to have seen them.

This learned dissertator, however valuable for his industry and erudition, is yet more to be esteemed for having dared so freely, in the midst of France, to declare his disapprobation of the patriarch Oviedo's sanguinary zeal, who was continually importuning the Portuguese to beat up their drums for missionaries who might preach the gospel with swords in their hands, and propagate, by desolation and slaughter, the true worship of the God of peace.

It is not easy to forebear reflecting with how little reason these men profess themselves the followers of JESUS, who left this great characteristick to his disciples, that they should be known by loving one another, by universal and unbounded charity and benevolence.

Let us suppose an inhabitant of some remote and superiour region, yet unskilled in the ways of men, having read and considered the precepts of the gospel, and the example of our Saviour, to come down in search of the true church. If he would not inquire after it among the cruel, the insolent, and the oppressive; among those who are continually grasping at dominion over souls as well as bodies; among those who are employed in procuring to themselves impunity for the most enormous villanies, and studying methods of destroying their fellow-creatures, not for their crimes, but their errours; if he would not expect to meet benevolence engage in massa-

cres, or to find mercy in a court of inquisition,—he would not look for the true church in the church of Rome.

Mr. Le Grand has given, in one dissertation, an example of great moderation, in deviating from the temper of his religion; but, in the others, has left proofs, that learning and honesty are often too weak to oppose prejudice. He has made no scruple of preferring the testimony of father Du Bernat to the writings of all the Portuguese jesuits, to whom he allows great zeal, but little learning, without giving any other reason than that his favourite was a Frenchman. This is writing only to Frenchmen and to papists: a protestant would be desirous to know, why he must imagine that father Du Bernat had a cooler head or more knowledge, and why one man, whose account is singular, is not more likely to be mistaken than many agreeing in the same account.

If the Portuguese were biassed by any particular views, another bias equally powerful may have deflected the Frenchman from the truth; for they evidently write with contrary designs: the Portuguese, to make their mission seem more necessary, endeavoured to place, in the strongest light, the differences between the Abyssinian and Roman church; but the great Ludolfus, laying hold on the advantage, reduced these later writers to prove their conformity.

Upon the whole, the controversy seems of no great importance to those who believe the holy Scriptures sufficient to teach the way to salvation; but, of

whatever moment it may be thought, there are no proofs sufficient to decide it.

His discourses on indifferent subjects will divert, as well as instruct; and if either in these, or in the relation of father Lobo, any argument shall appear unconvincing, or description obscure, they are defects incident to all mankind, which, however, are not rashly to be imputed to the authors, being sometimes, perhaps, more justly chargeable on the translator.

In this translation (if it may be so called) great liberties have been taken, which, whether justifiable or not, shall be fairly confessed, and let the judicious part of mankind pardon or condemn them.

In the first part, the greatest freedom has been used, in reducing the narration into a narrow compass; so that it is by no means a translation, but an epitome, in which, whether every thing either useful or entertaining be comprised, the compiler is least qualified to determine.

In the account of Abyssinia, and the continuation, the authors have been followed with more exactness; and as few passages appeared either insignificant or tedious, few have been either shortened or omitted.

The dissertations are the only part in which an exact translation has been attempted; and even in those, abstracts are sometimes given, instead of literal quotations, particularly in the first; and sometimes other parts have been contracted.

Several memorials and letters, which are printed at the end of the dissertations to secure the credit of the foregoing narrative, are entirely left out.

It is hoped that, after this confession, whoever shall compare this attempt with the original, if he shall find no proofs of fraud or partiality, will candidly overlook any failure of judgment.

AN ESSAY ON EPITAPHS[u]

THOUGH criticism has been cultivated in every age of learning, by men of great abilities and extensive knowledge, till the rules of writing are become rather burdensome than instructive to the mind; though almost every species of composition has been the subject of particular treatises, and given birth to definitions, distinctions, precepts and illustrations; yet no critick of note, that has fallen within my observation, has hitherto thought sepulchral inscriptions worthy of a minute examination, or pointed out, with proper accuracy, their beauties and defects.

The reasons of this neglect it is useless to inquire, and, perhaps, impossible to discover; it might be justly expected that this kind of writing would have been the favourite topick of criticism, and that self-love might have produced some regard for it, in those authors that have crowded libraries with elaborate dissertations upon Homer; since to afford a subject for heroick poems is the privilege of very few, but every man may expect to be recorded in an epitaph, and, therefore, finds some interest in providing that his memory may not suffer by an unskilful panegyrick.

If our prejudices in favour of antiquity deserve to have any part in the regulation of our studies, epitaphs seem entitled to more than common regard, as they are, probably, of the same age with the art of writing. The most ancient structures in

[u] From the Gentleman's Magazine.

the world, the pyramids, are supposed to be sepulchral monuments, which either pride or gratitude erected; and the same passions which incited men to such laborious and expensive methods of preserving their own memory, or that of their benefactors, would, doubtless, incline them not to neglect any easier means by which the same ends might be obtained. Nature and reason have dictated to every nation, that to preserve good actions from oblivion, is both the interest and duty of mankind: and, therefore, we find no people acquainted with the use of letters, that omitted to grace the tombs of their heroes and wise men with panegyrical inscriptions.

To examine, therefore, in what the perfection of epitaphs consists, and what rules are to be observed in composing them, will be, at least, of as much use as other critical inquiries; and for assigning a few hours to such disquisitions, great examples, at least, if not strong reasons, may be pleaded.

An epitaph, as the word itself implies, is an inscription on a tomb, and, in its most extensive import, may admit, indiscriminately, satire or praise. But as malice has seldom produced monuments of defamation, and the tombs, hitherto raised, have been the work of friendship and benevolence, custom has contracted the original latitude of the word, so that it signifies, in the general acceptation, an inscription engraven on a tomb in honour of the person deceased.

As honours are paid to the dead, in order to in-

cite others to the imitation of their excellencies, the principal intention of epitaphs is to perpetuate the examples of virtue, that the tomb of a good man may supply the want of his presence, and veneration for his memory produce the same effect as the observation of his life. Those epitaphs are, therefore, the most perfect, which set virtue in the strongest light, and are best adapted to exalt the readers ideas, and rouse his emulation.

To this end it is not always necessary to recount the actions of a hero, or enumerate the writings of a philosopher; to imagine such informations necessary, is to detract from their characters, or to suppose their works mortal, or their achievements in danger of being forgotten. The bare name of such men answers every purpose of a long inscription.

Had only the name of Sir Isaac Newton been subjoined to the design upon his monument, instead of a long detail of his discoveries, which no philosopher can want, and which none but a philosopher can understand, those, by whose direction it was raised, had done more honour both to him and to themselves.

This, indeed, is a commendation which it requires no genius to bestow, but which can never become vulgar or contemptible, if bestowed with judgment; because no single age produces many men of merit superiour to panegyrick. None but the first names can stand unassisted against the attacks of time; and if men raised to reputation by accident or caprice, have nothing but their names engraved on their

tombs, there is danger lest, in a few years, the inscription require an interpreter. Thus have their expectations been disappointed who honoured Picus of Mirandola with this pompous epitaph:

Hic situs est Picus Mirandola, cætera norunt
Et Tagus et Ganges, forsan et Antipodes.

His name, then celebrated in the remotest corners of the earth, is now almost forgotten; and his works, then studied, admired, and applauded, are now mouldering in obscurity.

Next in dignity to the bare name is a short character simple and unadorned, without exaggeration, superlatives, or rhetorick. Such were the inscriptions in use among the Romans, in which the victories gained by their emperours were commemorated by a single epithet; as Cæsar Germanicus, Cæsar Dacius, Germanicus, Illyricus. Such would be this epitaph, Isaacus Newtonus, naturæ legibus investigatis, hic quiescit.

But to far the greatest part of mankind a longer encomium is necessary for the publication of their virtues, and the preservation of their memories; and, in the composition of these it is, that art is principally required, and precepts, therefore, may be useful.

In writing epitaphs, one circumstance is to be considered, which affects no other composition; the place in which they are now commonly found restrains them to a particular air of solemnity, and debars them from the admission of all lighter or gayer ornaments. In this, it is that, the style of an

epitaph necessarily differs from that of an elegy. The customs of burying our dead, either in or near our churches, perhaps, originally founded on a rational design of fitting the mind for religious exercises, by laying before it the most affecting proofs of the uncertainty of life, makes it proper to exclude from our epitaphs all such allusions as are contrary to the doctrines, for the propagation of which the churches are erected, and to the end for which those who peruse the monuments must be supposed to come thither. Nothing is, therefore, more ridiculous than to copy the Roman inscriptions, which were engraven on stones by the highway, and composed by those who generally reflected on mortality only to excite in themselves and others a quicker relish of pleasure, and a more luxurious enjoyment of life, and whose regard for the dead extended no farther than a wish that "the earth might be light upon them."

All allusions to the heathen mythology are, therefore, absurd, and all regard for the senseless remains of a dead man impertinent and superstitious. One of the first distinctions of the primitive Christians, was their neglect of bestowing garlands on the dead, in which they are very rationally defended by their apologist in Manutius Felix. "We lavish no flowers nor odours on the dead," says he, "because they have no sense of fragrance or of beauty." We profess to reverence the dead, not for their sake, but for our own. It is, therefore, always with indignation or contempt that I read the epitaph on Cowley, a

man whose learning and poetry were his lowest merits.

> Aurea dum late volitant tua scripta per orbem,
> Et fama eternum vivis, divine poeta,
> Hic placida jaceas requie, custodiat urnam
> Cana fides, vigilentque perenni lampade musæ!
> Sit sacer ille locus, nec quis temerarius ausit
> Sacrilega turbare manu venerabile bustum.
> Intacti maneant, maneant per sæcula dulces
> Cowleii cineres, serventque immobile saxum.

To pray that the ashes of a friend may lie undisturbed, and that the divinities that favoured him in his life may watch for ever round him, to preserve his tomb from violation, and drive sacrilege away, is only rational in him who believes the soul interested in the repose of the body, and the powers which he invokes for its protection able to preserve it. To censure such expressions, as contrary to religion, or as remains of heathen superstition, would be too great a degree of severity. I condemn them only as uninstructive and unaffecting, as too ludicrous for reverence or grief, for Christianity and a temple.

That the designs and decorations of monuments ought, likewise, to be formed with the same regard to the solemnity of the place, cannot be denied; it is an established principle, that all ornaments owe their beauty to their propriety. The same glitter of dress, that adds graces to gaiety and youth, would make age and dignity contemptible. Charon with his boat is far from heightening the awful grandeur of the universal judgment, though drawn by Angelo himself; nor is it easy to imagine a greater absurd-

ity than that of gracing the walls of a Christian temple, with the figure of Mars leading a hero to battle, or Cupids sporting round a virgin. The pope who defaced the statues of the deities at the tomb of Sannazarius is, in my opinion, more easily to be defended, than he that erected them.

It is, for the same reason, improper to address the epitaph to the passenger, a custom which an injudicious veneration for antiquity introduced again at the revival of letters, and which, among many others, Passeratius suffered to mislead him in his epitaph upon the heart of Henry, king of France, who was stabbed by Clement the monk, which yet deserves to be inserted, for the sake of showing how beautiful even improprieties may become in the hands of a good writer.

Adsta, viator, et dole regum vices.
Cor regis isto conditur sub marmore,
Qui jura Gallis, jura Sarmatis dedit;
Tectus cucullo hunc sustulit sicarius.
Abi, viator, et dole regum vices.

In the monkish ages, however ignorant and unpolished, the epitaphs were drawn up with far greater propriety than can be shown in those which more enlightened times have produced.

Orate pro anima miserrimi peccatoris,

was an address, to the last degree, striking and solemn, as it flowed naturally from the religion then believed, and awakened in the reader sentiments of benevolence for the deceased, and of concern for his own happiness. There was nothing trifling or ludi-

crous, nothing that did not tend to the noblest end, the propagation of piety, and the increase of devotion.

It may seem very superfluous to lay it down as the first rule for writing epitaphs, that the name of the deceased is not to be omitted; nor should I have thought such a precept necessary, had not the practice of the greatest writers shown, that it has not been sufficiently regarded. In most of the poetical epitaphs, the names for whom they were composed, may be sought to no purpose, being only prefixed on the monument. To expose the absurdity of this omission, it is only necessary to ask how the epitaphs, which have outlived the stones on which they were inscribed, would have contributed to the information of posterity, had they wanted the names of those whom they celebrated.

In drawing the character of the deceased, there are no rules to be observed which do not equally relate to other compositions. The praise ought not to be general, because the mind is lost in the extent of any indefinite idea, and cannot be affected with what it cannot comprehend. When we hear only of a good or great man, we know not in what class to place him, nor have any notion of his character, distinct from that of a thousand others; his example can have no effect upon our conduct, as we have nothing remarkable or eminent to propose to our imitation. The epitaph composed by Ennius for his own tomb, has both the faults last mentioned.

Nemo me decoret lacrumis, nec funera fletu
Faxit. Cur? — Volito vivu' per ora virum.

The reader of this epitaph receives scarce any idea from it; he neither conceives any veneration for the man to whom it belongs, nor is instructed by what methods this boasted reputation is to be obtained.

Though a sepulchral inscription is professedly a panegyrick, and, therefore, not confined to historical impartiality, yet it ought always to be written with regard to truth. No man ought to be commended for virtues which he never possessed, but whoever is curious to know his faults must inquire after them in other places; the monuments of the dead are not intended to perpetuate the memory of crimes, but to exhibit patterns of virtue. On the tomb of Mæcenas his luxury is not to be mentioned with his munificence, nor is the proscription to find a place on the monument of Augustus.

The best subject for epitaphs is private virtue; virtue exerted in the same circumstances in which the bulk of mankind are placed, and which, therefore, may admit of many imitators. He that has delivered his country from oppression, or freed the world from ignorance and errour, can excite the emulation of a very small number; but he that has repelled the temptations of poverty, and disdained to free himself from distress, at the expense of his virtue, may animate multitudes, by his example, to the same firmness of heart and steadiness of resolution.

Of this kind I cannot forbear the mention of two Greek inscriptions; one upon a man whose writings are well known, the other upon a person whose

memory is preserved only in her epitaph, who both lived in slavery, the most calamitous estate in human life:

Ζωσίμη ἡ πρὶν ἔουσα μονῷ τῷ σώματι δούλη,
Καὶ τῷ σώματι νῦν εὗρεν ἐλευθερίην.

"Zosima, quæ solo fuit olim corpore serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit."

"Zosima, who, in her life, could only have her body enslaved, now finds her body, likewise, set at liberty."

It is impossible to read this epitaph without being animated to bear the evils of life with constancy, and to support the dignity of human nature under the most pressing afflictions, both, by the example of the heroine, whose grave we behold, and the prospect of that state in which, to use the language of the inspired writers, "The poor cease from their labours, and the weary be at rest."——

The other is upon Epictetus, the Stoick philosopher:

Δοῦλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμην, καὶ σῶμ' ἀνάπηρος,
Καὶ πενίην Ἶρος, καὶ φίλος Ἀθανατοῖς.

"Servus Epictetus, mutilatus corpore, vixi
Pauperieque Irus, curaque prima deum."

"Epictetus, who lies here, was a slave and a cripple, poor as the beggar in the proverb, and the favourite of heaven."

In this distich is comprised the noblest panegyrick, and the most important instruction. We may learn from it, that virtue is impracticable in no condition, since Epictetus could recommend himself to the regard of heaven, amidst the temptations

of poverty and slavery; slavery, which has always been found so destructive to virtue, that in many languages a slave and a thief are expressed by the same word. And we may be, likewise, admonished by it, not to lay any stress on a man's outward circumstances, in making an estimate of his real value, since Epictetus the beggar, the cripple, and the slave, was the favourite of heaven.

PREFACE TO AN ESSAY[v]

MILTON'S USE AND IMITATION OF THE MODERNS IN HIS PARADISE LOST

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1750

IT is now more than half a century since the Paradise Lost, having broke through the clouds with which the unpopularity of the author, for a time, obscured it, has attracted the general admiration of mankind; who have endeavoured to compensate the errour of their first neglect, by lavish praises and boundless veneration. There seems to have arisen a contest, among men of genius and literature, who should most advance its honour, or best distinguish its beauties. Some have revised editions, others have

[v] The history of Lauder's imposition is now almost forgotten, and is, certainly, not worth revival. It is fully detailed in Dr. Drake's Literary Life of Johnson, and in Boswell's Life, i. The conflicting inferences drawn from Johnson's connexion with Lauder, by Hayley, Dr. Symonds and Boswell, may easily be settled by those who have leisure for, or take interest in, such inquiries. In the very heat of the controversy, Johnson was never accused of intentional deception. Dr. Douglas, in the year 1750, published a letter to the earl of Bath, entitled, Milton vindicated from the charge of plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder. In this masterly letter, after exposing the gross impositions and forgeries of Lauder, he thus adverts to the author of the preface and postscript. "It is to be hoped, nay, it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments, and inimitable style, point out the author of Lauder's preface and postscript, will no longer allow one to plume himself with his feathers, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance; an assistance which, I am persuaded, would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts, which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world in these sheets." p. 77. 8vo. 1751.

In Boswell's Life, i. 209, ed. 1816, Mr. Boswell thus writes, in a note: "His lordship (Dr. Douglas, then bishop of Salisbury) has been pleased now to authorise me to say, in the strongest manner, that there is no ground whatever for any unfavourable reflection against Dr. Johnson, who expressed the strongest indignation against Lauder."— Ed.

published commentaries, and all have endeavoured to make their particular studies, in some degree, subservient to this general emulation.

Among the inquiries, to which this ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius, in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps, from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of its first plan; to find what was first projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected, whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own.

This inquiry has been, indeed, not wholly neglected, nor, perhaps, prosecuted with the care and diligence that it deserves. Several criticks have offered their conjectures; but none have much endeavoured to enforce or ascertain them. Mr. Voltaire[w] tells us, without proof, that the first hint of Paradise Lost was taken from a farce called Adamo, written by a player; Dr. Pearce[x], that it was derived

[w] Essay upon the civil wars of France, and also upon the epick poetry of the European nations, from Homer down to Milton, 8vo. 1727, p. 103.

[x] Preface to a review of the text of the twelve books of Milton's Paradise Lost, in which the chief of Dr. Bentley's emendations are considered, 8vo. 1733.

from an Italian tragedy, called Il Paradiso Perso; and Mr. Peck[y], that it was borrowed from a wild romance. Any of these conjectures may possibly be true, but, as they stand without sufficient proof, it must be granted, likewise, that they may all possibly be false; at least, they cannot preclude any other opinion, which, without argument, has the same claim to credit, and may, perhaps, be shown, by resistless evidence, to be better founded.

It is related, by steady and uncontroverted tradition, that the Paradise Lost was at first a tragedy, and, therefore, amongst tragedies the first hint is properly to be sought. In a manuscript, published from Milton's own hand, among a great number of subjects for tragedy, is Adam unparadised, or Adam in exile; and this, therefore, may be justly supposed the embryo of this great poem. As it is observable, that all these subjects had been treated by others, the manuscript can be supposed nothing more, than a memorial or catalogue of plays, which, for some reason, the writer thought worthy of his attention. When, therefore, I had observed, that Adam in exile was named amongst them, I doubted not but, in finding the original of that tragedy, I should disclose the genuine source of Paradise Lost. Nor was my expectation disappointed; for, having procured the Adamus exul of Grotius, I found, or imagined myself to find, the first draught, the prima stamina of this wonderful poem.

Having thus traced the original of this work, I

[y] New Memoirs of Mr. John Milton, by Francis Peck. 4to. 1740. p. 52.

was naturally induced to continue my search to the collateral relations, which it might be supposed to have contracted, in its progress to maturity: and having, at least, persuaded my own judgment that the search has not been entirely ineffectual, I now lay the result of my labours before the publick; with full conviction that, in questions of this kind, the world cannot be mistaken, at least, cannot long continue in errour.

I cannot avoid acknowledging the candour of the author of that excellent monthly book, the Gentleman's Magazine, in giving admission to the specimens in favour of this argument; and his impartiality in as freely inserting the several answers. I shall here subjoin some extracts from the seventeenth volume of this work, which I think suitable to my purpose. To which I have added, in order to obviate every pretence for cavil, a list of the authors quoted in the following essay, with their respective dates, in comparison with the date of Paradise Lost.

POSTSCRIPT

When this Essay was almost finished, the splendid edition of Paradise Lost, so long promised by the reverend Dr. Newton, fell into my hands; of which I had, however, so little use, that, as it would be injustice to censure, it would be flattery to commend it: and I should have totally forborne the mention of a book that I have not read, had not one passage at the conclusion of the life of Milton, excited in me too much pity and indignation to be suppressed in silence.

"Deborah, Milton's youngest daughter," says the editor, "was married to Mr. Abraham Clarke, a weaver, in Spitalfields, and died in August, 1727, in the 76th year of her age. She had ten children. Elizabeth, the youngest, was married to Mr. Thomas Foster, a weaver, in Spitalfields, and had seven children, who are all dead; and she, herself, is aged about sixty, and weak and infirm. She seemeth to be a good, plain, sensible woman, and has confirmed several particulars related above, and informed me of some others, which she had often heard from her mother." These the doctor enumerates, and then adds, "In all probability, Milton's whole family will be extinct with her, and he can live only in his writings. And such is the caprice of fortune, this granddaughter of a man, who will be an everlasting glory to the nation, has now for some years, with her husband, kept a little chandler's or grocer's shop, for their subsistence, lately at the lower Holloway, in the road between Highgate and London, and, at present, in Cocklane, not far from Shoreditch-church."

That this relation is true cannot be questioned: but, surely, the honour of letters, the dignity of sacred poetry, the spirit of the English nation, and the glory of human nature, require—that it should be true no longer.—In an age, in which statues are erected to the honour of this great writer, in which his effigy has been diffused on medals, and his work propagated by translations, and illustrated by commentaries; in an age, which amidst all its vices,

and all its follies, has not become infamous for want of charity: it may be, surely, allowed to hope, that the living remains of Milton will be no longer suffered to languish in distress. It is yet in the power of a great people, to reward the poet whose name they boast, and from their alliance to whose genius, they claim some kind of superiority to every other nation of the earth; that poet, whose works may possibly be read when every other monument of British greatness shall be obliterated; to reward him—not with pictures, or with medals, which, if he sees, he sees with contempt, but—with tokens of gratitude, which he, perhaps, may even now consider as not unworthy the regard of an immortal spirit. And, surely, to those, who refuse their names to no other scheme of expense, it will not be unwelcome, that a subscription is proposed, for relieving, in the languor of age, the pains of disease, and the contempt of poverty, the granddaughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Nor can it be questioned, that if I, who have been marked out as the Zoilus of Milton, think this regard due to his posterity, the design will be warmly seconded by those, whose lives have been employed, in discovering his excellencies, and extending his reputation.

Subscriptions for the relief of MRS. ELIZABETH FOSTER, granddaughter to JOHN MILTON, are taken in by Mr. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall; Messrs. Cox and Collings, under the Royal Exchange; Mr. Cave, at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell; and Messrs. Payne and Bouquet, in Paternoster-Row.

VINDICATION OF MILTON

BY A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. DOUGLAS

To which are subjoined several curious original letters from the authors of the Universal History, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Mac-Laurin, &c.

BY WILLIAM LAUDER, A. M.

Quem pœnitet peccasse pene est innocens. SENECA.

Corpora magnanimo satis est prostrasse Leoni:
Pugna suum finem, quum jacet hostis, habet. OVID.

——— *Prætuli clementiam*
Juris rigori.——— GROTII Adamus Exul.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1751

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS

Dr. Johnson no sooner discovered the iniquitous conduct and designs of Lauder, than he compelled him to confess and recant, in the following letter to the reverend Mr. Douglas, which he drew up for him: but scarcely had Lauder exhibited this sign of contrition, when he addressed an apology to the archbishop of Canterbury, soliciting his patronage for an edition of the very poets whose works he had so misapplied, and concluding his address in the following spirit: "As for the interpolations for which I am so highly blamed, when passion is subsided, and the minds of men can patiently attend to truth, I promise amply to replace them with passages equivalent in value, that are genuine, that the public may be convinced that it was rather passion and resentment, than a penury of evidence, the twentieth part of which has not yet been produced, that obliged me to make use of them." This did not satiate his malice: in 1752, he published the first volume of the proposed edition of the Latin poets, and in 1753, a second, accompanied with notes, both Latin and English, in a style of acrimonious scurrility, indicative almost of insanity. In 1754, he brought forward a pamphlet, entitled, King Charles vindicated from the charge of plagiarism, brought against him by Milton, and Milton himself convicted of forgery and gross imposition on the public. 8vo. In this work he exhausts every epithet of abuse, and utterly disclaims every statement made in his apology. It was reviewed, probably by Johnson, in the Gent. Mag. 1754, p. 97.— ED.

LETTER TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS

TO THE REVEREND MR. DOUGLAS

SIR,

CANDOUR and tenderness are, in any relation, and on all occasions, eminently amiable; but when they are found in an adversary, and found so prevalent as to overpower that zeal which his cause excites, and that heat which naturally increases in the prosecution of argument, and which may be, in a great measure, justified by the love of truth, they certainly appear with particular advantages; and it is impossible not to envy those who possess the friendship of him, whom it is, even, some degree of good fortune to have known as an enemy.

I will not so far dissemble my weakness, or my fault, as not to confess that my wish was to have passed undetected; but, since it has been my fortune to fail in my original design, to have the suppositious passages, which I have inserted in my quotations, made known to the world, and the shade which began to gather on the splendour of Milton totally dispersed, I cannot but count it an alleviation of my pain, that I have been defeated by a man who knows how to use advantages, with so much moderation, and can enjoy the honour of conquest, without the insolence of triumph.

It was one of the maxims of the Spartans, not to press upon a flying army, and, therefore, their enemies were always ready to quit the field, because they knew the danger was only in opposing. The civility with which you have thought proper to treat me, when you had incontestable superiority, has

inclined me to make your victory complete, without any further struggle, and not only publicly to acknowledge the truth of the charge which you have hitherto advanced, but to confess, without the least dissimulation, subterfuge, or concealment, every other interpolation I have made in those authors, which you have not yet had opportunity to examine.

On the sincerity and punctuality of this confession, I am willing to depend for all the future regard of mankind, and cannot but indulge some hopes, that they, whom my offence has alienated from me, may, by this instance of ingenuity and repentance, be propitiated and reconciled. Whatever be the event, I shall, at least, have done all that can be done in reparation of my former injuries to Milton, to truth, and to mankind; and entreat that those who shall continue implacable, will examine their own hearts, whether they have not committed equal crimes, without equal proofs of sorrow, or equal acts of atonement[z].

PASSAGES INTERPOLATED IN MASENIUS

The word "pandæmonium," in the marginal notes of Book i. Essay, page 10.

Citation 6. Essay, page 38

Annuit ipsa Dolo, malumque (heu! longa dolendi
Materies! et triste nefas!) vesana momordit,
Tanti ignara mali. Mora nulla: solutus avernus
Exspuit infandas acies; fractumque remugit,
Divulsa compage, solum: Nabathæa receptum
Regna dedere sonum, Pharioque in littore Nereus

[z]The interpolations are distinguished by inverted commas.

Territus erubuit: simul aggemuere dolentes
Hesperiæ valles, Libyæque calentis arenæ
Exarsere procul. Stupefacta Lycaonis ursa
Constitit, et pavido riguit glacialis in axe:
Omnis cardinibus submotus inhorruit orbis;
"Angeli hoc efficiunt, cœlestia jussa secuti."

Citation 7. Essay, page 41

Illa quidem fugiens, sparsis per terga capillis,
Ora rigat lacrimis, et cœlum questibus implet:
Talia voce rogans. Magni Deus arbiter orbis!
Qui rerum momenta tenes, solusque futuri
Præscius, elapsique memor: quem terra potentem
Imperio, cœlique tremunt; quem dite superbus
Horrescit Phlegethon, pavidoque furore veretur:
En! Styge crudeli premimur. Laxantur hiatus
Tartarei, dirusque solo dominatur Avernus,
" Infernique canes populantur cuncta creata,"
Et manes violant superos: discrimina rerum
Sustulit Antitheus, divumque oppressit honorem.
Respice Sarcotheam: nimis, heu! decepta momordit
Infaustas epulas, nosque omnes prodidit hosti.

Citation 8. Essay, page 42; the whole passage

" Quadrupedi pugnat quadrupes, volucrique volucris;
Et piscis cum pisce ferox hostilibus armis
Prælia sæva gerit: jam pristina pabula spernunt,
Jam tondere piget viridantes gramine campos:
Alterum et alterius vivunt animalia letho:
Prisca nec in gentem humanam reverentia durat;
Sed fugiunt, vel, si steterant, fera bella minantur
Fronte truci, torvosque oculos jaculantur in illam."

Citation 9. Essay, page 43

" Vatibus antiquis numerantur lumine cassis,"
Tiresias, " Phineus," Thamyrisque, et magnus Homerus.

The above passage stands thus in Masenius, in one line:

Tiresias cæcus, Thamyrisque, et Daphnis, Homerus.

N. B. The verse now cited is in Masenius's poems, but not in the Sarcotis.

Citation 10. Essay, page 46

In medio, turmas inter provectus ovantes
Cernitur Antitheus; reliquis hic altior unus
Eminet, et circum vulgus despectat inane:
Frons nebulis obscura latet, torvumque furorem
Dissimulat, fidæ tectus velamine noctis:
" Persimilis turri præcelsæ, aut montibus altis
Antiquæ cedro, nudatæ frondis honore."

PASSAGES INTERPOLATED IN GROTIUS

Citation 1. Essay, page 55

Sacri tonantis hostis, exsul patriæ
Cœlestis adsum; Tartari tristem specum
Fugiens, et atram noctis æternæ plagam.
Hac spe, quod unum maximum fugio malum,
Superos videbo. Fallor? an certe meo
Concussa tellus tota trepidat pondere?
" Quid dico? Tellus? Orcus et pedibus tremit."

Citation 2. Essay, page 58; the whole passage

——— " Nam, me judice,
Regnare dignum est ambitu, etsi in Tartaro:
Alto præcesse Tartaro siquidem juvat,
Cœlis quam in ipsis servi obire munera."

Citation 4. Essay, page 61; the whole passage

" Innominata quæque nominibus suis,
Libet vocare propriis vocabulis."

Citation 5. Essay, page 63

Terrestris orbis rector! et princeps freti!
" Cœli solique soboles; ætherium genus! "
Adame! dextram liceat amplecti tuam!

Citation 6. Essay, *ibid*

Quod illud animal, tramite obliquo means,
Ad me volutum flexili serpit via?
Sibila retorquet ora setosum caput
Trifidamque linguam vibrat: oculi ardent duo,
" Carbunculorum luce certantes rubra."

Citation 7. Essay, page 65; the whole passage

—— " Nata deo! atque homine sata!
Regina mundi! eademque interitus inscia!
Cunctis colenda! " ——

Citation 8. Essay, page 66; the whole passage

" Rationis etenim omnino paritas exigit,
Ego bruta quando bestia evasi loquens;
Ex homine, qualis ante, te fieri deam."

Citation 9. Essay, *ibid*

Per sancta thalami sacra, per jus nominis
Quodcumque nostri: sive me natam vocas,
Ex te creatam; sive communi patre
Ortam, sororem; sive potius conjugem:
" Cassam, oro, dulci luminis jubare tui "
Ne me relinquas: nunc tuo auxilio est opus.
Cum versa sors est. Unicum lapsæ mihi
Firmamen, unam spem gravi adflictæ malo,
Te mihi reserva, dum licet: mortalium
Ne tota soboles pereat unius nece:
" Tibi nam relicta, quo petam? aut ævum exigam? "

Citation 10. Essay, page 67; the whole passage

" Tu namque soli numini contrarius,
Minus es nocivus; ast ego nocentior,
(Adeoque misera magis, quippe miseriæ comes
Origoque scelus est, lurida mater male!)
Deumque læsi scelere, teque, vir! simul."

Citation 11. Essay, page 68; the whole passage

" Quod comedo, poto, gigno, diris subjacet."

INTERPOLATION IN RAMSAY

Citation 6. Essay, page 88

O judex! nova me facies inopinaque terret;
Me maculæ turpes, nudæque in corpore sordes,
Et cruciant duris exercita pectora pœnis:
Me ferus horror agit. Mihi non vernantia prata,
Non vitræi fontes, cœli non aurea templa,
Nec sunt grata mihi sub utroque jacentia sole:
Judicis ora dei sic terrent, lancinat ægrum
Sic pectus mihi noxa. O si mî abrumpere vitam,
Et detur pœnam quovis evadere letho!
Ipsa parens utinam mihi tellus ima dehiscat!
Ad piceas trudarque umbras, atque infera regna!
" Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam! "
Montibus aut premar injectis, cœlique ruina!
Ante tuos vultus, tua quam flammantiaque ora
Suspiciam, caput objectem et cœlestibus armis!

LETTER TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS

INTERPOLATIONS IN STAPHORSTIUS

Citation 3. Essay, page 104

Fœdus in humanis fragili quod sanctius ævo!
Firmius et melius, quod magnificentius, ac quam
Conjugii, sponsi sponsæque jugalia sacra!
"Auspice te, fugiens alieni subcuba lecti,
Diro libido hominum tota de gente repulsa est:
Ac tantum gregibus pecudum ratione carentum
Imperat, et sine lege tori furibunda vagatur.
Auspice te, quam jura probant, rectumque, piumque,
Filius atque pater, fraterque innotuit: et quot
Vincula vicini sociarunt sanguinis, a te
Nominibus didicere suam distinguere gentem."

Citation 6. Essay, page 109

Cœlestes animæ! sublimia templa tenentes,
Laudibus adcumulate deum super omnia magnum! —
Tu quoque nunc animi vis tota ac maxuma nostri!
Tota tui in Domini grates dissolvere laudes!
"Aurora redeunte nova, redeuntibus umbris."
Immensum! augustum! verum! inscrutabile numen!
Summe Deus! sobolesque Dei! concorsque duorum,
Spiritus! æternas retines, bone rector! habenas,
Per mare, per terras, cœlosque, atque unus Jehova
Existens, celebrabo tuas, memorique sonabo
Organico plectro laudes. Te pectore amabo,
" Te primum, et medium, et summum, sed fine carentem,"
O miris mirande modis! ter maxime rerum!
Collustrat terras dum lumine Titan Eoo!

INTERPOLATION IN FOX

Essay, page 116

——— Tu Psychephone
Hypocrisis esto, hoc sub Francisci pallio.
Tu Thanate, Martyromastix re et nomine sies.
Altered thus,
——— Tu Pyschephone!
Hypocrisis esto; hoc sub Francisci Pallio,
" Quo tuto tecti sese credunt emori."

INTERPOLATION IN QUINTIANUS

Essay, page 117

Mic. Cur huc procaci veneris cursu refer?
Manere si quis in sua potest domo,
Habitare numquam curet alienas domos.
Luc. Quis non, relicta Tartari nigri domo,
Veniret? Illic summa tenebrarum lues,
Ubi pedor ingens redolet extremum situm.
Hic autem amœna regna, et dulcis quies;
Ubi serenus ridet æternum dies.
Mutare facile[a] est pondus immensum levi;
"Summos dolores maximisque gaudiis."

INTERPOLATION IN BEZA

Essay, page 119

Stygemque testor, et profunda Tartari,
Nisi impediret livor, et queis prosequor
Odia supremum numen, atque hominum genus,
Pietate motus hinc patris, et hinc filii,
Possem parenti condolere et filio,
"Quasi exuissem omnem malitiam ex pectore."

INTERPOLATION IN FLETCHER

Essay, page 124

Nec tamen æternos obliti (absiste timere)
Umquam animos, fessique ingentes ponimus iras.
Nec fas; non sic deficimus, nec talia tecum
Gessimus, in cœlos olim tua signa secuti.
Est hic, est vitæ et magni contemptor Olympi,
Quique oblatam animus lucis nunc respuat aulam,
Et domiti tantum placeat cui regia cœli.
Ne dubita, numquam fractis hæc pectora, numquam
Deficient animis: prius ille ingentia cœli
Atria, desertosque æternæ lucis alumnos
Destituens, Erebum admigret noctemque profundam,
Et Stygiis mutet radiantia lumina flammis.
"In promptu caussa est: superest invicta voluntas,
Immortale odium, vindicatæ et sæva cupido."

INTERPOLATIONS IN TAUBMAN

Essay, page 132

Tune, ait, imperio regere omnia solus; et una
Filius iste tuus, qui se tibi subjicit ultro,

[a] For *facile*, the word *volupe* was substituted in the Essay.

Ac genibus minor ad terram prosternit, et offert
Nescio quos toties animi servilis honores?
Et tamen æterni proles æterna Jehovæ
Audit ab ætherea lutea que propagine mundi.
("Scilicet hunc natum dixisti cuncta regentem;
Cælitibus regem cunctis, dominumque supremum")
Huic ego sim supplex? ego? quo præstantior alter
Non agit in superis. Mihi jus dabit ille, suum qui
Dat caput alterius sub jus et vincula legum?
Semideus reget iste polos? reget avia terræ?
Me pressum leviore manu fortuna tenebit?
"Et cogar æternum duplici servire tyranno?"
Haud ita. Tu solus non polles fortibus ausis.
Non ego sic cecidi, nec sic mea fata premuntur,
Ut nequeam relevare caput, colloque superbum
Excutere imperium. Mihi si mea dextra favebit,
Audeo totius mihi jus promittere mundi.

Essay, page 152

"Throni, dominationes, principatus, virtutes, potestates," is said to be a line borrowed by Milton from the title-page of Heywood's Hierarchy of Angels. But there are more words in Heywood's title; and, according to his own arrangement of his subjects, they should be read thus:—"Seraphim, cherubim, throni, potestates, angeli, archangeli, principatus, dominationes."

These are my interpolations, minutely traced without any arts of evasion. Whether from the passages that yet remain, any reader will be convinced of my general assertion, and allow, that Milton had recourse for assistance to any of the authors whose names I have mentioned, I shall not now be very diligent to inquire, for I had no particular pleasure in subverting the reputation of Milton, which I had my-

self once endeavoured to exalt[b]; and of which, the foundation had always remained untouched by me, had not my credit and my interest been blasted, or thought to be blasted, by the shade which it cast from its boundless elevation.

About ten years ago, I published an edition of Dr. Johnston's translation of the Psalms, and having procured from the general assembly of the church of Scotland, a recommendation of its use to the lower classes of grammar schools, into which I had begun to introduce it, though not without much controversy and opposition, I thought it likely that I should, by annual publications, improve my little fortune, and be enabled to support myself in freedom from the miseries of indigence. But Mr. Pope, in his malevolence to Mr. Benson, who had distinguished himself by his fondness for the same version, destroyed all my hopes by a distich, in which

[b] Virorum maximus — Joannes Miltonus — Poeta celeberrimus — non Angliæ modo, soli natalis, verum generis humani ornamentum — cujus eximus liber, Anglicanis versibus conscriptus, vulgo Paradisus amissus, immortalis illud ingenii monumentum, cum ipsa fere æternitate perennaturum est opus! — Hujus memoriam Anglorum primus, post tantum, proh dolor! ab tanti excessu poetæ intervallum, statua eleganti in loco celeberrimo, cœnobio Westmonasteriensi, posita, regum, principum, antistitum, illustriumque Angliæ virorum cæmeterio, vir ornatissimus, gulielmus Benson prosecutus est.

Poetarum Scotorum Musæ Sacræ, in præfatione, Edinb. 1739.

A character, as high and honourable as ever was bestowed upon him by the most sanguine of his admirers! and as this was my cool and sincere opinion of that wonderful man formerly, so I declare it to be the same still, and ever will be, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, occasioned merely by passion and resentment; which appear, however, by the Postcript to the Essay, to be so far from extending to the posterity of Milton, that I recommend his only remaining descendant, in the warmest terms, to the public.

he places Johnston in a contemptuous comparison with the author of Paradise Lost[c].

From this time, all my praises of Johnston became ridiculous, and I was censured, with great freedom, for forcing upon the schools an author whom Mr. Pope had mentioned only as a foil to a better poet. On this occasion, it was natural not to be pleased, and my resentment seeking to discharge itself somewhere, was unhappily directed against Milton. I resolved to attack his fame, and found some passages in cursory reading, which gave me hopes of stigmatizing him as a plagiary. The farther I carried my search, the more eager I grew for the discovery; and the more my hypothesis was opposed, the more I was heated with rage. The consequence of my blind passion, I need not relate; it has, by your detection, become apparent to mankind. Nor do I

[c] On two unequal crutches propp'd he† came;
Milton's on this, on that *one* Johnston's name. Dunciad, Book IV.

† *Benson.*] This man endeavoured to raise himself to fame, by erecting monuments, striking coins, and procuring translations of Milton; and afterwards by a great passion for Arthur Johnston, a Scots physician's version of the Psalms, of which he printed many fine editions. *Notes on the Dunciad.*

No fewer than six different editions of that useful and valuable book, two in quarto, two in octavo, and two in a lesser form, now lie, like lumber, in the hand of Mr. Vaillant, bookseller, the effects of Mr. Pope's ill-natured criticism.

One of these editions in quarto, illustrated with an interpretation and notes, after the manner of the classic authors *in usum Delphini*, was, by the worthy editor, anno 1741, inscribed to his Royal Highness Prince George, as a proper book for his instruction in principles of piety, as well as knowledge of the Latin tongue, when he should arrive at due maturity of age. To restore this book to credit was the cause that induced me to engage in this disagreeable controversy, rather than any design to depreciate the just reputation of Milton.

mention this provocation, as adequate to the fury which I have shown, but as a cause of anger, less shameful and reproachful than fractious malice, personal envy, or national jealousy.

But for the violation of truth, I offer no excuse, because I well know, that nothing can excuse it. Nor will I aggravate my crime, by disingenuous palliations. I confess it, I repent it, and resolve, that my first offence shall be my last. More I cannot perform, and more, therefore, cannot be required. I entreat the pardon of all men, whom I have by any means induced to support, to countenance, or patronise my frauds, of which, I think myself obliged to declare, that not one of my friends was conscious. I hope to deserve, by better conduct, and more useful undertakings, that patronage which I have obtained from the most illustrious and venerable names by misrepresentation and delusion, and to appear hereafter in such a character, as shall give you no reason to regret that your name is frequently mentioned with that of,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant,

WILLIAM LAUDER.

December 20, 1750.

TESTIMONIES CONCERNING MR. LAUDER

Edinb. May 22, 1734.

THESE are certifying, that Mr. William Lauder past his course at this university, to the general satisfaction of these masters, under whom he studied. That he has applied himself particularly to the study of humanity[d] ever since. That for several years past, he has taught with success, students in the humanity class, who were recommended to him by the professor thereof. And lastly, has taught that class itself, during the indisposition, and since the death of its late professor: and, therefore, is, in our opinion, a fit person to teach humanity in any school or college whatever.

J. GOWDIE, S. S. T. P.
MATT. CRAUFURD, S. S. T. et HIST. EC. PR. REG.
WILLIAM SCOTT, P. P.
ROBERT STUART, PH. NAT. PR.
COL. DRUMMOND, L. G. et P. PR.
COL. MAC-LAURIN, MATH. P. EDIN.
AL. BAYNE, J. P.
CHARLES MACKY, HIST. P.
ALEX. MORRO, ANAT. P.
WILLIAM DAWSON, L. H. P.

A Letter from the Reverend Mr. Patrick Cuming, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, and Regius Professor of Church History in the University there, to the Reverend Mr. Blair, Rector of the Grammar school at Dundee

D. B.

UPON a public advertisement in the newspapers, of the vacancy of a master's place in your school, Mr. William Lauder, a friend of mine, proposes to

[d] So the Latin tongue is called in Scotland, from the Latin phrase, *classis humaniorum literarum*, the class or form where that language is taught

set up for a candidate, and goes over for that purpose. He has long taught the Latin with great approbation in this place, and given such proofs of his mastery in that language, that the best judges do, upon all occasions, recommend him as one who is qualified in the best manner. He has taught young boys and young gentlemen, with great success; nor did I ever hear of any complaint of him from either parents or children. I beg leave to recommend him to you as my friend; what friendship you show him, I will look upon as a very great act of friendship to me, of which he and I will retain the most grateful sense, if he is so happy as to be preferred. I persuade myself, you will find him ready at all times to be advised by you, as I have found him. *Indeed if justice had been done him, he should long ago have been advanced for his merit.* I ever am,

D. B.

Your most affectionate, humble servant,

PATRICK CUMING.

Edin. Nov. 13, 1742.

A Letter from Mr. Mac-Laurin, late Professor of Mathematicks in the University of Edinburgh, to the Reverend Mr. George Blair, Rector of the Grammar school at Dundee

SIR,

THOUGH unacquainted, I take the liberty of giving you this trouble, from the desire I have always had to see Mr. Lauder provided in a manner suited to his talent. I know him to have made uncommon progress in classical learning, to have taught it with success, and never heard there could be any com-

plaint against his method of teaching. I am, indeed, a stranger to the reasons of his want of success on former occasions. But after conversing with him, I have ground to hope, that he will be always advised by you, for whom he professes great esteem, and will be useful under you. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

COLIN MAC-LAURIN.

College of Edinburgh, Nov. 30, 1742.

A Letter from the Authors of the Universal History, to Mr. Lauder.

London, August 12th, 1741.

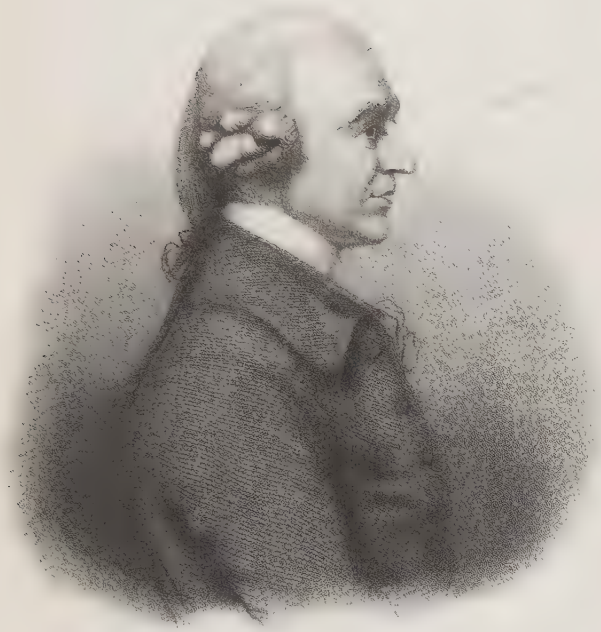
LEARNED SIR,

WHEN we so gladly took the first opportunity of reviving the memory and merit of your incomparable Johnston, in the first volume of our Universal History, our chief aim was to excite some generous Mecenas to favour the world with a new edition of a poem which we had long since beheld with no small concern, buried, as it were, by some unaccountable fatality, into an almost total oblivion; whilst others of that kind, none of them superior, many vastly inferior to it, rode, unjustly, as we thought, triumphant over his silent grave. And it is with great satisfaction that we have seen our endeavours so happily crowned in the edition you soon after gave of it at Edinburgh, in your learned and judicious vindication of your excellent author, and more particularly by the just deference which your learned and pious convocation has been pleased to pay to that admirable version.

We have had since then, the pleasure to see your worthy example followed here, in the several beautiful editions of the honourable Mr. Auditor Benson, with his critical notes upon the work.

It was, indeed, the farthest from our thoughts, to enter into the merit of the controversy between your two great poets, Johnston and Buchanan; neither were we so partial to either as not to see, that each had their shades as well as lights; so that, if the latter has been more happy in the choice and variety of his metre, it is as plain, that he has given his poetic genius such an unlimited scope, as has in many cases quite disfigured the peculiar and inimitable beauty, simplicity, and energy of the original, which the former, by a more close and judicious version, has constantly, and surprisingly displayed. Something like this we ventured to hint in our note upon these two noble versions; to have said more, would have been inconsistent with our designed brevity.

We have, likewise, since seen what your opponent has writ in praise of the one, and derogation of the other, and think you have sufficiently confuted him, and with respect to us, he has been so far from giving us any cause to retract what we had formerly said, that it has administered an occasion to us of vindicating it, as we have lately done by some critical notes on your excellent Johnston, which we communicated soon after to Mr. *A. B.* who was pleased to give them a place in his last edition of him, and which we doubt not you have seen



RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE

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long ago. How they have been relished among you we know not, but with us they have been thought sufficient to prove what we have advanced, as well as to direct the attentive reader to discover new instances of your author's exactness and elegance, in every page, if not almost in every line.

We gratefully accept of the books, and kind compliments you were pleased to transmit to us by Mr. Strahan, and had long since returned you our thanks, but for the many avocations which the great work you know us to be engaged in doth of necessity bring upon us; obliging us, or some, at least, of our society, to make, from time to time, an excursion to one or other of our two learned universities, and consulting them upon the best method of carrying on this work to the greatest advantage to the public. This has been some considerable part of our employment for these twelve months past; and we flatter ourselves, that we have, with their assistance and approbation, made such considerable improvements on our original plan, as will scarcely fail of being acceptable to the learned world. They will shortly appear in print, to convince the world that we have not been idle, though this sixth volume is like to appear somewhat later in the year than was usual with our former ones. We shall take the liberty to transmit some copies of our new plan to you as soon as they are printed. All we have left to wish with respect to your excellent countryman and his version is, that it may always meet with such powerful and impartial advocates, and that it

may be as much esteemed by all candid judges, as it is by,

Learned Sir,

Your sincere willwishers and humble servants,

The AUTHORS of the Universal History.

A Letter from the learned Mr. Robert Ainsworth, author of the Latin and English Dictionary, to Mr. Lauder

LEARNED AND WORTHY SIR,

THESE wait on you, to thank you for the honour you have done a person, equally unknown as undeserving, in your valuable present, which I did not receive till several weeks after it was sent: and since I received it, my eyes have been so bad, and my hand so unstable, that I have been forced to defer my duty, as desirous to thank you with my own hand. I congratulate to your nation the just honour ascribed to it by its neighbours and more distant countries, in having bred two such excellent poets as your Buchanan and Johnston, whom to name is to commend; but am concerned for their honour at home, who being committed together, seem to me both to suffer a diminution, whilst justice is done to neither. But at the same time I highly approve your nation's piety in bringing into your schools sacred instead of profane poesy, and heartily wish that ours, and all Christian governments, would follow your example herein. If a mixture of *utile dulci* be the best composition in poetry, (which is too evident to need the judgment of the nicest critick in the art,) surely the *utile* so transcendently excels in

the sacred hymns, that a Christian must deny his name that doth not acknowledge it: and if the *dulce* seem not equally to excel, it must be from a vitiated taste of those who read them in the original, and, in others, at second-hand, from translations. For the manner of writing in the east and west is widely distant, and which to a paraphrast must render his task exceeding difficult, as requiring a perfect knowledge in two languages, wherein the idioms and graces of speech, caused by the diversity of their religion, laws, customs, &c. are as remote as the inhabitants, wherein, notwithstanding, your poets have succeeded to admiration.

Your main contest seems to me, when stript of persons, whether the easy or sublime in poesy be preferable; if so,

Non opis est nostræ tantam componere litem:

nor think I it in your case material to be decided. Both these have their particular excellencies and graces, and youth ought to be taught wherein (which the matter ought chiefly to determine) the one hath place, and where the other. Now since the hymns of David, Moses, and other divine poets, intermixt with them, (infinitely excelling those of Callimachus, Alcæus, Sappho, Anacreon, and all others,) abound in both these virtues, and both your poets are acknowledged to be very happy in paraphrasing them, it is my opinion, both of them, without giving the least preference to either, should be read alternately in your schools, as the tutor shall direct. Pardon, learned Sir, this scribble to my age and weakness,

both which are very great, and command me wherein I may serve you, as,

Learned Sir,

Your obliged, thankful, and obedient servant,

ROBERT AINSWORTH.

Spitalfields, Sept. 1741.

A Letter from the Authors of the Universal History to Mr. Auditor Benson

SIR,

IT is with no small pleasure that we see Dr. Johnston's translation of the Psalms revived in so elegant a manner, and adorned with such a just and learned display of its inimitable beauties. As we flatter ourselves that the character we gave it, in our first volume of the Universal History, did, in some measure, contribute to it, we hope, that in justice to that great poet, you will permit us to cast the following mites into your treasury of critical notes on his noble version. We always thought the palm by far this author's due, as upon many other accounts, so especially for two excellencies hitherto not taken notice of by any critic, that we know of, and which we beg leave to transmit to you, and if you think fit, by you to the public, in the following observations.

We beg leave to subscribe ourselves,

Sir, &c.

The AUTHORS of the Universal History.

Dr. Isaac Watts, D. D. in his late book, entitled, The Improvement of the Mind, Lond. 1741, p. 114

UPON the whole survey of things, it is my opinion, that for almost all boys who learn this tongue, [the

Latin,] it would be much safer to be taught Latin poesy, as soon, and as far as they can need it, from those excellent translations of David's Psalms, which are given us by Buchanan in the various measures of Horace; and the lower classes had better read Dr. Johnston's translation of those Psalms, another elegant writer of the Scots nation, instead of Ovid's Epistles; for he has turned the same Psalms, perhaps, with greater elegancy, into eligiac verse, whereof the learned W. Benson, esq., has lately published a new edition; and I hear that these Psalms are honoured with an increasing use in the schools of Holland and Scotland. A stanza, or a couplet of those writers would now and then stick upon the minds of youth, and would furnish them infinitely better with pious and moral thoughts, and do something towards making them good men and Christians.

An Act of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, recommending Dr. Arthur Johnston's Latin Paraphrase of the Psalms of David, &c.

At Edinburgh, 13th of November, 1740, post meridiem

A Petition having been presented to the late General Assembly, by Mr. William Lauder, teacher of humanity in Edinburgh, craving, That Dr. Arthur Johnston's Latin Paraphrase on the Psalms of David, and Mr. Robert Boyd, of Trochrig, his Hecatombe Christiana, may be recommended to be taught in all grammar schools; and the Assembly having appointed a committee of their number to

take the desire of the foresaid petition into their consideration, and report to the commission: the said committee offered their opinion, that the commission should grant the desire of the said petition, and recommend the said Dr. Johnston's Paraphrase to be taught in the lower classes of the schools, and Mr. George Buchanan's Paraphrase on the Psalms, together with Mr. Robert Boyd of Trochrig's, Hecatombe Christiana in the higher classes of schools, and humanity-classes in universities. The commission having heard the said report, unanimously approved thereof, and did, and hereby do, recommend accordingly.

Extracted by

WILLIAM GRANT[e], Cl. Ecl. Sc.

A Letter from the learned Mr. Abraham Gronovius, Secretary to the University of Leyden, to Mr. Lauder, concerning the Adamus Exsul of Grotius

Clarissimo Viro, Wilhelmo Laudero, Abrahamus Gronovius, S. P. D.

POSTQUAM binæ literæ tuæ ad me perlatæ fuerunt, duas editiones carminum H. Grotii, viri vere summi, excussi; verum ab utraque tragœdiam, quam Adamum Exsulem inscripsit 'ο ΠΑΝΥ, abesse deprehendi; neque ullum ejusdem exemplar, quamvis tres[f] editiones exstare adnotaveram, ullibi offen-

[e] This honourable gentleman is now his Majesty's Advocate for Scotland.

[f] Though Gronovius here mentions only three editions of this noble and curious performance, the Adamus Exsul of Grotius; yet it appears from

dere potui, adeo ut spe, quam vorabam desiderio tuo satisfaciendi, me prorsus excidisse existimarem.

Verum nuperrime forte contigit, ut primam tragœdiæ Grotianæ editionem, Hagæ, an. 1601, publicatam, beneficio amicissimi mihi viri nactus fuerim, ejusque decem priores paginas, quibus, præter chorum, actus primus comprehenditur, a Jacobo meo, optimæ spei adolescente, transcriptas nunc ad te mitto. Vale, vir doctissime, meque, ut facis, amare perge. Dabam Lugd. Bat. A. D. IV. Id. Sept. A. D. MDCCXLVI.

A second Letter from the same gentleman to Mr. Lauder, on the same subject

Clarissime atque eruditissime vir,

POSTEAQUAM, tandem Jacobus meus residuam partem, quam desiderabas, tragœdiæ Grotianæ transcripserat, ut ea diutius careres, committere nolui: quod autem citius illam ad finem perducere non potuerit, obstiterunt variæ occupationes, quibus districtus fuit. Nam, præter scholastica studia, quibus strenue incubuit, ipsi componenda erat oratio, qua rudimenta linguæ Græcæ Latinæque deponeret, eamque, quod vehementer lætor, venuste, et quidem stilo ligato, composuit, et in magna auditorum corona pronuntiavit. Quod autem ad exemplar ipsum, quo Adamus Exsul comprehenditur, spectat, id lubens, si meum foret, ad te perferri

the catalogue of his works, that no fewer than four have been printed, two in quarto, and two in octavo, in the years 1601, 1608, and 1635; two having been made, one in quarto, the other in octavo, anno 1601.

curarem, verum illud a clarissimo possessore tanti æstimatur, ut persuasum habeam me istud minime ab ipso impetraturum: et sane sacra carmina Grotii adeo raro obvia sunt, ut eorundem exemplar apud ipsos remonstrantium ecclesiastas frustra quæsiverim.

Opus ipsum, inscriptum est HENRICO BORBONIO, PRINCIPI CONDÆO; et forma libri est in quarto, ut nullo pacto literis includi possit. Ceterum, pro splendidissima et Magnæ Britanniæ principe, cui merito dicata est, digna editione Psalmorum, ex versione metrica omnium fere poetarum principis JONSTONI maximas tibi grates habet agitque Jacobus. Utinam illustrissimus Pensonus in usum serenissimi principis, atque ingeniorum in altiora surgentium, eadem forma, iisdemque typis exarari juberet divinos illos Ciceronis de Officiis libros, dignos sane, quos diurna nocturnaque manu versaret princeps, a quo aliquando Britannici regni majestas et populi salus pendebunt! Interim tibi, eruditissime vir, atque etiam politissimo D. Caveo, pro muneribus literariis, quæ per nobilissimum Lawsonium[g] ad me curastis, magno opere me obstrictum agnosco, eademque, summa cum voluptate, a me perlecta sunt.

[g] The person here meant was the learned and worthy Dr. Isaac Lawson, late physician to the English army in Flanders; by whom Mr. Gronovius did me the honour to transmit to me two or three acts of the Adamus Exsul of Grotius, transcribed by his son, Mr. James. The truth of this particular consists perfectly well with the knowledge of the Doctor's brother, John Lawson, esq. counsellor at law; who also had the same thing lately confirmed to him by Mr. Gronovius himself in Holland.

Filius meus te plurimum salutat.

Vale, doctissime vir, meisque verbis D. Caveum saluta, atque amare perge,

Tuum,

ABRAHAMUM GRONOVIUM.

Dabam Leidis, A. D. xiv. KAL. Maias, A. D. MDCCXLVII.

POSTSCRIPT

AND now my character is placed above all suspicion of fraud by authentick documents, I will make bold, at last, to pull off the mask, and declare sincerely the true motive that induced me to interpolate a few lines into some of the authors quoted by me in my Essay on Milton, which was this: Knowing the prepossession in favour of Milton, how deeply it was rooted in many, I was willing to make trial, if the partial admirers of that author would admit a translation of his own words to pass for his sense, or exhibit his meaning; which I thought they would not: nor was I mistaken in my conjecture, forasmuch as several gentlemen, seemingly persons of judgment and learning, assured me, they humbly conceived I had not proved my point, and that Milton might have written as he has done, supposing he had never seen these authors, or they had never existed. Such is the force of prejudice! This exactly confirms the judicious observation of the excellent moralist and poet:

Pravo favore labi mortales solent;
Et pro judicio dum stant erroris sui,
Ad pœnitendum rebus manifestis agi.

For, had I designed, as the vindicator of Milton supposes, to impose a trick on the publick, and procure credit to my assertions by an imposture, I would never have drawn lines from Hog's translation of Milton, a book common at every sale, I had almost said, at every stall, nor ascribed them to authors so easily attained: I would have gone another way to work, by translating forty or fifty lines, and assigning them to an author, whose works possibly might not be found till the world expire at the general conflagration. My imposing, therefore, on the publick in general, instead of a few obstinate persons, for whose sake alone the stratagem was designed, is the only thing culpable in my conduct, for which again I most humbly ask pardon: and that this, and this only, was, as no other could be, my design, no one, I think, can doubt, from the account I have just now given; and whether that was so criminal, as it has been represented, I shall leave every impartial mind to determine.

AN ACCOUNT OF AN ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN THE LONGITUDE[h]

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1755

IT is well known to seamen and philosophers, that, after the numerous improvements produced by the extensive commerce of the latter ages, the great defect in the art of sailing is ignorance of longitude, or of the distance to which the ship has passed eastward or westward, from any given meridian.

That navigation might be at length set free from this uncertainty, the legislative power of this kingdom incited the industry of searchers into nature, by a large reward proposed to him who should show a practicable method of finding the longitude at sea; and proportionable recompenses to those, who, though they should not fully attain this great end, might yet make such advances and discoveries as should facilitate the work to those that might succeed them.

By the splendour of this golden encouragement many eyes were dazzled, which nature never intended to pry into her secrets. By the hope of sudden riches many understandings were set on work very little proportioned to their strength, among whom whether mine shall be numbered, must be left to the candour of posterity: for I, among others, laid aside the business of my profession, to apply myself to the study of the longitude, not, indeed, in

[h] An account of an attempt to ascertain the longitude at sea, by an exact theory of the variation of the magnetical needle; with a table of variations at the most remarkable cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1860. By Zachariah Williams.

expectation of the reward due to a complete discovery; yet, not without hopes that I might be considered as an assistant to some greater genius, and receive from the justice of my country the wages offered to an honest and not unsuccessful labourer in science.

Considering the various means by which this important inquiry has been pursued, I found that the observation of the eclipses, either of the primary or secondary planets, being possible but at certain times, could be of no use to the sailor; that the motions of the moon had been long attended, however accurately, without any consequence; that other astronomical observations were difficult and uncertain, with every advantage of situation, instruments, and knowledge; and were, therefore, utterly impracticable to the sailor, tost upon the water, ill provided with instruments, and not very skilful in their application.

The hope of an accurate clock or time-keeper is more specious. But when I began these studies, no movements had yet been made that were not evidently unaccurate and uncertain: and even of the mechanical labours which I now hear so loudly celebrated, when I consider the obstruction of movements by friction, the waste of their parts by attrition, the various pressure of the atmosphere, the effects of different effluvia upon metals, the power of heat and cold upon all matter, the changes of gravitation and the hazard of concussion, I cannot but fear that they will supply the world with an-

other instance of fruitless ingenuity, though, I hope, they will not leave upon this country the reproach of unrewarded diligence.

I saw, therefore, nothing on which I could fix with probability of success, but the magnetical needle, an instrument easily portable, and little subject to accidental injuries, with which the sailor has had a long acquaintance, which he will willingly study, and can easily consult.

The magnetick needle, from the year 1300, when it is generally supposed to have been first applied by Flavio Gioia, of Amalfi, to the seaman's use, seems to have been long thought to point exactly to the north and south by the navigators of those times; who sailing commonly on the calm Mediterranean, or making only short voyages, had no need of very accurate observations; and who, if they ever transiently observed any deviations from the meridian, either ascribed them to some extrinsick and accidental cause, or willingly neglected what it was not necessary to understand.

But when the discovery of the new world turned the attention of mankind upon the naval sciences, and long courses required greater niceties of practice, the variation of the needle soon became observable, and was recorded, in 1500, by Sebastian Cabot, a Portuguese, who, at the expense of the king of England, discovered the northern coasts of America.

As the next century was a time of naval adventures, it might be expected that the variation once

observed, should have been well studied: yet it seems to have been little heeded; for it was supposed to be constant, and always the same in the same place, till, in 1625, Gellibrand noted its changes, and published his observations.

From this time the philosophical world had a new subject of speculation, and the students of magnetism employed their researches upon the gradual changes of the needle's direction, or the variations of the variation, which have hitherto appeared so desultory and capricious, as to elude all the schemes which the most fanciful of the philosophical dreamers could devise for its explication. Any system that could have united these tormenting diversities, they seem inclined to have received, and would have contentedly numbered the revolutions of a central magnet, with very little concern about its existence, could they have assigned it any motion, or vicissitude of motions, which would have corresponded with the changes of the needle.

Yet upon this secret property of magnetism I ventured to build my hopes of ascertaining the longitude at sea. I found it undeniably certain that the needle varies its direction in a course eastward or westward between any assignable parallels of latitude: and, supposing nature to be in this, as in all other operations, uniform and consistent, I doubted not but the variation proceeded in some established method, though, perhaps, too abstruse and complicated for human comprehension.

This difficulty, however, was to be encountered;

and by close and steady perseverance of attention I at last subdued, or thought myself to have subdued it: having formed a regular system in which all the phænomena seemed to be reconciled; and, being able, from the variation in places where it is known, to trace it to those where it is unknown; or from the past to predict the future; and, consequently, knowing the latitude and variation, to assign the true longitude of any place.

With this system I came to London, where, having laid my proposals before a number of ingenious gentlemen, it was agreed that during the time required to the completion of my experiments, I should be supported by a joint subscription to be repaid out of the reward, to which they concluded me entitled. Among the subscribers, was Mr. Rowley, the memorable constructor of the orrery; and among my favourers was the lord Piesley, a title not unknown among magnetical philosophers. I frequently showed, upon a globe of brass, experiments by which my system was confirmed, at the house of Mr. Rowley, where the learned and curious of that time generally assembled.

At this time great expectations were raised by Mr. Whiston, of ascertaining the longitude by the inclination of the needle, which he supposed to increase or diminish regularly. With this learned man I had many conferences, in which I endeavoured to evince what he has at last confessed in the narrative of his life, the uncertainty and inefficacy of his method.

About the year 1729, my subscribers explained my pretensions to the lords of the Admiralty, and the lord Torrington declared my claim just to the reward assigned, in the last clause of the act, to those who should make discoveries conducive to the perfection of the art of sailing. This he pressed with so much warmth, that the commissioners agreed to lay my tables before Sir Isaac Newton, who excused himself, by reason of his age, from a regular examination: but when he was informed that I held the variation at London to be still increasing; which he and the other philosophers, his pupils, thought to be then stationary, and on the point of regression, he declared that he believed my system visionary. I did not much murmur to be for a time overborne by that mighty name, even when I believed that the name only was against me: and I have lived till I am able to produce, in my favour, the testimony of time, the inflexible enemy of false hypotheses; the only testimony which it becomes human understanding to oppose to the authority of Newton.

My notions have, indeed, been since treated with equal superciliousness by those who have not the same title to confidence of decision; men who, though, perhaps, very learned in their own studies, have had little acquaintance with mine. Yet even this may be borne far better than the petulance of boys, whom I have seen shoot up into philosophers by experiments which I have long since made and neglected, and by improvements which I have so

long transferred into my ordinary practice, that I cannot remember when I was without them.

When Sir Isaac Newton had declined the office assigned him, it was given to Mr. Molineux, one of the commissioners of the Admiralty, who engaged in it with no great inclination to favour me; but, however, thought one of the instruments, which, to confirm my own opinion, and to confute Mr. Whiston's, I had exhibited to the Admiralty, so curious or useful, that he surreptitiously copied it on paper, and clandestinely endeavoured to have it imitated by a workman for his own use.

This treatment naturally produced remonstrances and altercations, which, indeed, did not continue long, for Mr. Molineux died soon afterwards; and my proposals were for a time forgotten.

I will not, however, accuse him of designing to condemn me, without a trial; for he demanded a portion of my tables to be tried in a voyage to America, which I then thought I had reason to refuse him, not yet knowing how difficult it was to obtain, on any terms, an actual examination.

About this time the theory of Dr. Halley was the chief subject of mathematical conversation; and though I could not but consider him as too much a rival to be appealed to as a judge, yet his reputation determined me to solicit his acquaintance and hazard his opinion. I was introduced to him by Mr. Lowthorp and Dr. Desaguliers, and put my tables into his hands; which, after having had them about twenty days under consideration,

he returned in the presence of the learned Mr. Machin, and many other skilful men, with an entreaty that I would publish them speedily; for I should do infinite service to mankind.

It is one of the melancholy pleasures of an old man, to recollect the kindness of friends, whose kindness he shall experience no more. I have now none left to favour my studies; and, therefore, naturally turn my thoughts on those by whom I was favoured in better days: and I hope the vanity of age may be forgiven, when I declare that I can boast among my friends, almost every name of my time that is now remembered: and that, in that great period of mathematical competition, scarce any man failed to appear as my defender, who did not appear as my antagonist.

By these friends I was encouraged to exhibit to the Royal Society, an ocular proof of the reasonableness of my theory by a sphere of iron, on which a small compass moved in various directions, exhibiting no imperfect system of magnetical attraction. The experiment was shown by Mr. Hawkesbee, and the explanation, with which it was accompanied, was read by Dr. Mortimer. I received the thanks of the society; and was solicited to reposit my theory, properly sealed and attested, among their archives, for the information of posterity. I am informed, that this whole transaction is recorded in their minutes.

After this I withdrew from publick notice, and applied myself wholly to the continuation of my

experiments, the confirmation of my system, and the completion of my tables, with no other companion than Mr. Gray, who shared all my studies and amusements, and used to repay my communications of magnetism, with his discoveries in electricity. Thus I proceeded with incessant diligence; and, perhaps, in the zeal of inquiry, did not sufficiently reflect on the silent encroachments of time, or remember, that no man is in more danger of doing little, than he who flatters himself with abilities to do all. When I was forced out of my retirement, I came loaded with the infirmities of age, to struggle with the difficulties of a narrow fortune; cut off by the blindness of my daughter from the only assistance which I ever had; deprived by time of my patron and friends; a kind of stranger in a new world, where curiosity is now diverted to other objects, and where, having no means of ingratiating my labours, I stand the single votary of an obsolete science, the scoff of puny pupils of puny philosophers.

In this state of dereliction and depression, I have bequeathed to posterity the following table; which, if time shall verify my conjectures, will show that the variation was once known; and that mankind had once within their reach an easy method of discovering the longitude.

I will not, however, engage to maintain, that all my numbers are theoretically and minutely exact: I have not endeavoured at such degrees of accuracy as only distract inquiry without benefiting practice. The quantity of the variation has been settled partly

by instruments, and partly by computation: instruments must always partake of the imperfection of the eyes and hands of those that make, and of those that use them: and computation, till it has been rectified by experiment, is always in danger of some omission in the premises, or some errour in the deduction.

It must be observed, in the use of this table, that though I name particular cities, for the sake of exciting attention, yet the tables are adjusted only to longitude and latitude. Thus when I predict that, at Prague, the variation will in the year 1800 be $24\frac{1}{4}$ W. I intend to say, that it will be such, if Prague be, as I have placed it, after the best geographers in longitude, 14 30′. E. latitude 50 40′. but that this is its true situation I cannot be certain. The latitude of many places is unknown, and the longitude is known of very few; and even those who are unacquainted with science will be convinced that it is not easily to be found, when they are told how many degrees Dr. Halley, and the French mathematicians, place the cape of Good Hope distant from each other.

Those who would pursue this inquiry with philosophical nicety, must, likewise, procure better needles than those commonly in use. The needle, which, after long experience, I recommend to mariners, must be of pure steel, the spines and the cap of one piece, the whole length three inches, each spine containing four grains and a half of steel, and the cap thirteen grains and a half.

The common needles are so ill formed, or so unskilfully suspended, that they are affected by many causes besides magnetism; and, among other inconveniencies, have given occasion to the idle dream of a horary variation.

I doubt not but particular places may produce exceptions to my system. There may be, in many parts of the earth, bodies which obstruct or intercept the general influence of magnetism; but those interruptions do not infringe the theory. It is allowed, that water will run down a declivity, though sometimes a strong wind may force it upwards. It is granted, that the sun gives light at noon, though, in certain conjunctions, it may suffer an eclipse.

Those causes, whatever they are, that interrupt the course of the magnetical powers, are least likely to be found in the great ocean, when the earth, with all its minerals, is secluded from the compass by the vast body of uniform water. So that this method of finding the longitude, with a happy contrariety to all others, is most easy and practicable at sea.

This method, therefore, I recommend to the study and prosecution of the sailor and philosopher; and the appendant specimen I exhibit to the candid examination of the maritime nations, as a specimen of a general table, showing the variation at all times and places for the whole revolution of the magnetick poles, which I have long ago begun, and, with just encouragement, should have long ago completed.

BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PLANS OFFERED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION

In three letters, to the printer of the Gazetteer

LETTER I

SIR, Dec. 1, 1759.

THE plans which have been offered by different architects, of different reputation and abilities, for the construction of the bridge intended to be built at Blackfriars, are, by the rejection of the greater part, now reduced to a small number; in which small number, three are supposed to be much superiour to the rest; so that only three architects are now properly competitors for the honour of this great employment; by two of whom are proposed semicircular, and by the other elliptical arches.

The question is, therefore, whether an elliptical or semicircular arch is to be preferred?

The first excellence of a bridge, built for commerce, over a large river, is strength; for a bridge which cannot stand, however beautiful, will boast its beauty but a little while: the stronger arch is, therefore, to be preferred, and much more to be preferred, if, with greater strength, it has greater beauty.

Those who are acquainted with the mathematical principles of architecture, are not many; and yet fewer are they who will, upon any single occasion, endure any laborious stretch of thought, or harass their minds with unaccustomed investigations. We shall, therefore, attempt to show the weakness of the elliptical arch, by arguments which appeal simply

to common reason, and which will yet stand the test of geometrical examination.

All arches have a certain degree of weakness. No hollow building can be equally strong with a solid mass, of which every upper part presses perpendicularly upon the lower. Any weight laid upon the top of an arch, has a tendency to force that top into the vacuity below; and the arch, thus loaded on the top, stands only because the stones that form it, being wider in the upper than in the lower parts, that part that fills a wider space cannot fall through a space less wide; but the force which, laid upon a flat, would press directly downwards, is dispersed each way in a lateral direction, as the parts of a beam are pushed out to the right and left by a wedge driven between them. In proportion as the stones are wider at the top than at the bottom, they can less easily be forced downwards, and, as their lateral surfaces tend more from the centre to each side, to so much more is the pressure directed laterally towards the piers, and so much less perpendicularly towards the vacuity.

Upon this plain principle the semicircular arch may be demonstrated to excel in strength the elliptical arch, which, approaching nearer to a straight line, must be constructed with stones whose diminution downwards is very little, and of which the pressure is almost perpendicular.

It has yet been sometimes asserted by hardy ignorance, that the elliptical arch is stronger than the semicircular; or in other terms, that any mass is more strongly supported the less it rests upon the sup-

porters. If the elliptical arch be equally strong with the semicircular; that is, if an arch, by approaching to a straight line, loses none of its stability, it will follow, that all arcuation is useless, and that the bridge may at last, without any inconvenience, consist of stone laid in straight lines from pillar to pillar. But if a straight line will bear no weight, which is evident at the first view, it is plain, likewise, that an ellipsis will bear very little; and that, as the arch is more curved, its strength is increased.

Having thus evinced the superiour strength of the semicircular arch, we have sufficiently proved, that it ought to be preferred; but to leave no objection unprevented, we think it proper, likewise, to observe, that the elliptical arch must always appear to want elevation and dignity; and that if beauty be to be determined by suffrages, the elliptical arch will have little to boast, since the only bridge of that kind has now stood two hundred years without imitation.

If, in opposition to these arguments, and in defiance, at once, of right reason and general authority, the elliptical arch should at last be chosen, what will the world believe, than that some other motive than reason influenced the determination ? And some degree of partiality cannot but be suspected by him, who has been told that one of the judges appointed to decide this question, is Mr. M—ll—r, who, having by ignorance, or thoughtlessness, already preferred the elliptical arch, will, probably, think himself obliged to maintain his own judgment, though his

opinion will avail but little with the publick, when it is known that Mr. S—ps—n declares it to be false.

He that, in the list of the committee chosen for the superintendency of the bridge, reads many of the most illustrious names of this great city, will hope that the greater number will have more reverence for the opinion of posterity, than to disgrace themselves, and the metropolis of the kingdom, in compliance with any man, who, instead of voting, aspires to dictate, perhaps, without any claim to such superiority, either by greatness of birth, dignity of employment, extent of knowledge, or largeness of fortune.

LETTER II

SIR, Dec. 8, 1759.

In questions of general concern, there is no law of government, or rule of decency, that forbids open examination and publick discussion. I shall, therefore, not betray, by a mean apology, that right which no man has power, and, I suppose, no wise man has desire to refuse me; but shall consider the letter published by you last Friday, in defence of Mr. M—'s[1] design for a new bridge.

Mr. M—— proposes elliptical arches. It has been objected, that elliptical arches are weak; and, therefore, improper for a bridge of commerce, in a country where greater weights are ordinarily carried by land, than, perhaps, in any other part of the world. That there is an elliptical bridge at Florence is allowed, but the objectors maintain, that its stability is so

[1] Mr. Milne.

much doubted, that carts are not permitted to pass over it.

To this no answer is made, but that it was built for coaches; and if it had been built for carts, it would have been made stronger: thus all the controvertists agree, that the bridge is too weak for carts; and it is of little importance, whether carts are prohibited, because the bridge is weak, or whether the architect, knowing that carts were prohibited, voluntarily constructed a weak bridge. The instability of the elliptical arch has been sufficiently proved by argument, and Ammanuti's attempt has proved it by example.

The iron rail, whether gilt or varnished, appears to me unworthy of debate. I suppose every judicious eye will discern it to be minute and trifling, equally unfit to make a part of a great design, whatever be its colour. I shall only observe how little the writer understands his own positions, when he recommends it to be cast in whole pieces from pier to pier. That iron forged is stronger than iron cast, every smith can inform him; and if it be cast in large pieces, the fracture of a single bar must be repaired by a new piece.

The abrupt rise, which is feared from firm circular arches, may be easily prevented, by a little extension of the abutment at each end, which will take away the objection, and add almost nothing to the expense.

The whole of the argument in favour of Mr. M——, is only, that there is an elliptical bridge at Florence,

and an iron balustrade at Rome; the bridge is owned to be weak, and the iron balustrade we consider as mean, and are loath that our own country should unite two follies in a publick work.

The architrave of Perrault, which has been pompously produced, bears nothing but its entablature; and is so far from owing its support to the artful section of the stone, that it is held together by cramps of iron; to which I am afraid Mr. M—— must have recourse, if he persists in his ellipsis, or, to use the words of his vindicator, forms his arch of four segments of circles drawn from four different centres.

That Mr. M—— obtained the prize of the architecture at Rome, a few months ago, is willingly confessed; nor do his opponents doubt that he obtained it by deserving it. May he continue to obtain whatever he deserves; but let it not be presumed that a prize granted at Rome, implies an irresistible degree of skill. The competition is only between boys, and the prize, given to excite laudable industry, not to reward consummate excellence. Nor will the suffrage of the Romans much advance any name among those who know, what no man of science will deny, that architecture has, for some time, degenerated at Rome to the lowest state, and that the pantheon is now deformed by petty decorations.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER III

SIR, Dec. 15, 1759.

It is the common fate of erroneous positions, that they are betrayed by defence, and obscured by ex-

planation; that their authors deviate from the main question into incidental disquisitions, and raise a mist where they should let in light.

Of all these concomitants of errours, the letter of Dec. 10, in favour of elliptical arches, has afforded examples. A great part of it is spent upon digressions. The writer allows, that the first excellence of a bridge is undoubtedly strength: but this concession affords him an opportunity of telling us, that strength, or provision against decay, has its limits; and of mentioning the monument and cupola, without any advance towards evidence or argument.

The first excellence of a bridge is now allowed to be strength; and it has been asserted, that a semi-ellipsis has less strength than a semicircle. To this he first answers, that granting this position for a moment, the semi-ellipsis may yet have strength sufficient for the purposes of commerce. This grant, which was made but for a moment, needed not to have been made at all; for, before he concludes his letter, he undertakes to prove, that the elliptical arch must, in all respects, be superiour in strength to the semicircle. For this daring assertion he made way by the intermediate paragraphs, in which he observes, that the convexity of a semi-ellipsis may be increased at will to any degree that strength may require; which is, that an elliptical arch may be made less elliptical, to be made less weak; or that an arch, which, by its elliptical form, is superiour in strength to the semicircle, may become almost

as strong as a semicircle, by being made almost semicircular.

That the longer diameter of an ellipsis may be shortened, till it shall differ little from a circle, is indisputably true; but why should the writer forget the semicircle differs as little from such an ellipsis? It seems that the difference, whether small or great, is to the advantage of the semicircle; for he does not promise that the elliptical arch, with all the convexity that his imagination can confer, will stand without cramps of iron, and melted lead, and large stones, and a very thick arch; assistances which the semicircle does not require, and which can be yet less required by a semi-ellipsis, which is, in all respects, superiour in strength.

Of a man who loves opposition so well, as to be thus at variance with himself, little doubt can be made of his contrariety to others; nor do I think myself entitled to complain of disregard from one, with whom the performances of antiquity have so little weight; yet, in defiance of all this contemptuous superiority, I must again venture to declare, that a straight line will bear no weight; being convinced, that not even the science of Vasari can make that form strong which the laws of nature have condemned to weakness. By the position, that a straight line will bear nothing, is meant, that it receives no strength from straightness; for that many bodies, laid in straight lines, will support weight by the cohesion of their parts, every one has found, who has seen dishes on a shelf, or a thief upon the gallows.

It is not denied, that stones may be so crushed together by enormous pressure on each side, that a heavy mass may safely be laid upon them; but the strength must be derived merely from the lateral resistance; and the line, so loaded, will be itself part of the load.

The semi-elliptical arch has one recommendation yet unexamined: we are told, that it is difficult of execution. Why difficulty should be chosen for its own sake, I am not able to discover; but it must not be forgotten, that, as the convexity is increased, the difficulty is lessened; and I know not well, whether this writer, who appears equally ambitious of difficulty, and studious of strength, will wish to increase the convexity for the gain of strength, or to lessen it for the love of difficulty.

The friend of Mr. M——, however he may be mistaken in some of his opinions, does not want the appearance of reason, when he prefers facts to theories; and that I may not dismiss the question without some appeal to facts, I will borrow an example, suggested by a great artist, and recommended to those who may still doubt which of the two arches is the stronger, to press an egg first on the ends, and then upon the sides.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

SOME THOUGHTS ON AGRICULTURE

BOTH ANCIENT AND MODERN

With an account of the honour due to an English farmer[1]

AGRICULTURE, in the primeval ages, was the common parent of traffick; for the opulence of mankind then consisted in cattle, and the product of tillage, which are now very essential for the promotion of trade in general, but more particularly so to such nations as are most abundant in cattle, corn, and fruits. The labour of the farmer gives employment to the manufacturer, and yields a support for the other parts of the community: it is now the spring which sets the whole grand machine of commerce in motion; and the sail could not be spread without the assistance of the plough. But though the farmers are of such utility in a state, we find them, in general, too much disregarded among the politer kind of people in the present age; while we cannot help observing the honour that antiquity has always paid to the profession of the husbandman; which naturally leads us into some reflections upon that occasion.

Though mines of gold and silver should be exhausted, and the specie made of them lost; though diamonds and pearls should remain concealed in the bowels of the earth, and the womb of the sea; though commerce with strangers, be prohibited; though all arts, which have no other object than

[1] From the Universal Visitor, for February, 1756, p. 59.— Smart, the poet, had a considerable hand in this miscellany. The very first sentence, however, may convince any reader that Dr. Johnson did not write these Thoughts: they are inserted here merely as an introduction to the Further Thoughts, which follow, and which are undoubtedly his.

splendour and embellishment, should be abolished; yet the fertility of the earth alone would afford an abundant supply for the occasions of an industrious people, by furnishing subsistence for them, and such armies as should be mustered in their defence. We, therefore, ought not to be surprised, that agriculture was in so much honour among the ancients; for it ought rather to seem wonderful that it should ever cease to be so, and that the most necessary and most indispensable of all professions should have fallen into any contempt.

Agriculture was in no part of the world in higher consideration than Egypt, where it was the particular object of government and policy; nor was any country ever better peopled, richer, or more powerful. The satrapæ, among the Assyrians and Persians, were rewarded, if the lands in their governments were well cultivated; but were punished, if that part of their duty was neglected. Africa abounded in corn; but the most famous countries were Thrace, Sardinia, and Sicily.

Cato, the censor, has justly called Sicily the magazine and nursing mother of the Roman people, who were supplied from thence with almost all their corn, both for the use of the city, and the subsistence of her armies: though we also find in Livy, that the Romans received no inconsiderable quantities of corn from Sardinia. But, when Rome had made herself mistress of Carthage and Alexandria, Africa and Egypt became her storehouses; for those cities sent such numerous fleets every year, freighted

with corn, to Rome, that Alexandria alone annually supplied twenty millions of bushels: and, when the harvest happened to fail in one of these provinces, the other came in to its aid, and supported the metropolis of the world, which, without this supply, would have been in danger of perishing by famine. Rome actually saw herself reduced to this condition under Augustus; for there remained only three days' provision of corn in the city: and that prince was so full of tenderness for the people, that he had resolved to poison himself, if the expected fleets did not arrive before the expiration of that time; but they came; and the preservation of the Romans was attributed to the good fortune of their emperour: but wise precautions were taken to avoid the like danger for the future.

When the seat of empire was transplanted to Constantinople, that city was supplied in the same manner: and when the emperour, Septimius Severus, died, there was corn in the publick magazines for seven years, expending daily 75,000 bushels in bread, for 600,000 men.

The ancients were no less industrious in the cultivation of the vine than in that of corn, though they applied themselves to it later: for Noah planted it by order, and discovered the use that might be made of the fruit, by pressing out and preserving the juice. The vine was carried by the offspring of Noah into the several countries of the world; but Asia was the first to experience the sweets of this gift; from whence it was imparted to Europe and Africa.

Greece and Italy, which were distinguished in so many other respects, were particularly so by the excellency of their wines. Greece was most celebrated for the wines of Cyprus, Lesbos, and Chio; the former of which is in great esteem at present, though the cultivation of the vine has been generally suppressed in the Turkish dominions. As the Romans were indebted to the Grecians for the arts and sciences, so were they, likewise, for the improvement of their wines; the best of which were produced in the country of Capua, and were called the Massick, Calenian, Formian, Cæcuban, and Falernian, so much celebrated by Horace. Domitian passed an edict for destroying all the vines, and that no more should be planted throughout the greatest part of the west; which continued almost two hundred years afterwards, when the emperour Probus employed his soldiers in planting vines in Europe, in the same manner as Hannibal had formerly employed his troops in planting olive trees in Africa. Some of the ancients have endeavoured to prove, that the cultivation of vines is more beneficial than any other kind of husbandry: but, if this was thought so in the time of Columella, it is very different at present; nor were all the ancients of his opinion, for several gave the preference to pasture lands.

The breeding of cattle has always been considered as an important part of agriculture. The riches of Abraham, Laban, and Job, consisted in their flocks and herds. We also find from Latinus in Virgil, and Ulysses in Homer, that the wealth of those princes

consisted in cattle. It was, likewise, the same among the Romans, till the introduction of money, which put a value upon commodities, and established a new kind of barter. Varro has not disdained to give an extensive account of all the beasts that are of any use to the country, either for tillage, breed, carriage, or other conveniencies of man. And Cato, the censor, was of opinion, that the feeding of cattle was the most certain and speedy method of enriching a country.

Luxury, avarice, injustice, violence, and ambition, take up their ordinary residence in populous cities; while the hard and laborious life of the husbandman will not admit of these vices. The honest farmer lives in a wise and happy state, which inclines him to justice, temperance, sobriety, sincerity, and every virtue that can dignify human nature. This gave room for the poets to feign, that Astræa, the goddess of justice, had her last residence among husbandmen, before she quitted the earth. Hesiod and Virgil have brought the assistance of the Muses in praise of agriculture. Kings, generals, and philosophers, have not thought it unworthy their birth, rank, and genius, to leave precepts to posterity upon the utility of the husbandman's profession. Hiero, Attalus, and Archelaus, kings of Syracuse, Pergamus, and Cappadocia, have composed books for supporting and augmenting the fertility of their different countries. The Carthaginian general, Mago, wrote twenty-eight volumes upon this subject; and Cato, the censor, followed his example. Nor have

Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, omitted this article, which makes an essential part of their politicks. And Cicero, speaking of the writings of Xenophon, says, "How fully and excellently does he, in that book called his Economicks, set out the advantages of husbandry, and a country life!"

When Britain was subject to the Romans, she annually supplied them with great quantities of corn; and the isle of Anglesea was then looked upon as the granary for the western provinces; but the Britons, both under the Romans and Saxons, were employed like slaves at the plough. On the intermixture of the Danes and Normans, possessions were better regulated, and the state of vassalage gradually declined, till it was entirely worn off under the reigns of Henry the seventh and Edward the sixth; for they hurt the old nobility by favouring the commons, who grew rich by trade, and purchased estates.

The wines of France, Portugal, and Spain, are now the best; while Italy can only boast of the wine made in Tuscany. The breeding of cattle is now chiefly confined to Denmark and Ireland. The corn of Sicily is still in great esteem, as well as what is produced in the northern countries: but England is the happiest spot in the universe for all the principal kinds of agriculture, and especially its great produce of corn.

The improvement of our landed estates is the enrichment of the kingdom; for, without this, how could we carry on our manufactures, or prosecute our

commerce? We should look upon the English farmer as the most useful member of society. His arable grounds not only supply his fellow-subjects with all kinds of the best grain, but his industry enables him to export great quantities to other kingdoms, which might otherwise starve; particularly Spain and Portugal; for, in one year, there have been exported 51,520 quarters of barley, 219,781 of malt, 1,920 of oatmeal, 1,329 of rye, and 153,343 of wheat; the bounty on which amounted to 72,433 pounds. What a fund of treasure arises from his pasture lands, which breed such innumerable flocks of sheep, and afford such fine herds of cattle, to feed Britons, and clothe mankind! He rears flax and hemp for the making of linen; while his plantations of apples and hops supply him with generous kinds of liquors.

The land-tax, when at four shillings in the pound, produces 2,000,000 pounds a year. This arises from the labour of the husbandman: it is a great sum; but how greatly is it increased by the means it furnishes for trade! Without the industry of the farmer, the manufacturer could have no goods to supply the merchant, nor the merchant find any employment for the mariners: trade would be stagnated; riches would be of no advantage to the great; and labour of no service to the poor.

> The Romans, as historians all allow,
> Sought, in extreme distress, the rural plough;
> *Io triumphe!* for the village swain,
> Retired to be a nobleman[k] again.

[k] Cincinnatus.

SOME THOUGHTS ON AGRICULTURE

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON AGRICULTURE[1]

At my last visit, I took the liberty of mentioning a subject, which, I think, is not considered with attention proportionate to its importance. Nothing can more fully prove the ingratitude of mankind, a crime often charged upon them, and often denied, than the little regard which the disposers of honorary rewards have paid to agriculture, which is treated as a subject so remote from common life, by all those who do not immediately hold the plough, or give fodder to the ox, that I think there is room to question, whether a great part of mankind has yet been informed that life is sustained by the fruits of the earth. I was once, indeed, provoked to ask a lady of great eminence for genius, "Whether she knew of what bread is made?"

I have already observed, how differently agriculture was considered by the heroes and wise men of the Roman commonwealth, and shall now only add, that even after the emperours had made great alteration in the system of life, and taught men to portion out their esteem to other qualities than usefulness, agriculture still maintained its reputation, and was taught by the polite and elegant Celsus among the other arts.

The usefulness of agriculture I have already shown; I shall now, therefore, prove its necessity: and, having before declared, that it produces the chief riches of a nation, I shall proceed to show, that it gives its only riches, the only riches which

[1] From the Visiter for March, 1756, p. 111.

we can call our own, and of which we need not fear either deprivation or diminution.

Of nations, as of individuals, the first blessing is independence. Neither the man nor the people can be happy to whom any human power can deny the necessaries or conveniencies of life. There is no way of living without the need of foreign assistance, but by the product of our own land, improved by our own labour. Every other source of plenty is perishable or casual.

Trade and manufactures must be confessed often to enrich countries; and we ourselves are indebted to them for those ships by which we now command the sea from the equator to the poles, and for those sums with which we have shown ourselves able to arm the nations of the north in defence of regions in the western hemisphere. But trade and manufactures, however profitable, must yield to the cultivation of lands in usefulness and dignity.

Commerce, however we may please ourselves with the contrary opinion, is one of the daughters of Fortune, inconstant and deceitful as her mother; she chooses her residence where she is least expected, and shifts her abode when her continuance is, in appearance, most firmly settled. Who can read of the present distresses of the Genoese, whose only choice now remaining is, from what monarch they shall solicit protection? Who can see the Hanseatick towns in ruins, where, perhaps, the inhabitants do not always equal the number of the houses, but he will say to himself, these are the

cities, whose trade enabled them once to give laws to the world, to whose merchants princes sent their jewels in pawn, from whose treasuries armies were paid, and navies supplied? And who can then forbear to consider trade as a weak and uncertain basis of power, and wish to his own country greatness more solid, and felicity more durable?

It is apparent, that every trading nation flourishes, while it can be said to flourish, by the courtesy of others. We cannot compel any people to buy from us, or to sell to us. A thousand accidents may prejudice them in favor of our rivals; the workmen of another nation may labour for less price, or some accidental improvement, or natural advantage, may procure a just preference to their commodities; as experience has shown, that there is no work of the hands, which, at different times, is not best performed in different places.

Traffick, even while it continues in its state of prosperity, must owe its success to agriculture; the materials of manufacture are the produce of the earth. The wool which we weave into cloth, the wood which is formed into cabinets, the metals which are forged into weapons, are supplied by nature with the help of art. Manufactures, indeed, and profitable manufactures, are sometimes raised from imported materials, but then we are subjected, a second time, to the caprice of our neighbours. The natives of Lombardy might easily resolve to retain their silk at home, and employ workmen of their own to weave it. And this will certainly be

done when they grow wise and industrious, when they have sagacity to discern their true interest, and vigour to pursue it.

Mines are generally considered as the great sources of wealth, and superficial observers have thought the possession of great quantities of precious metals the first national happiness. But Europe has long seen, with wonder and contempt, the poverty of Spain, who thought herself exempted from the labour of tilling the ground, by the conquest of Peru, with its veins of silver. Time, however, has taught even this obstinate and haughty nation, that without agriculture they may, indeed, be the transmitters of money, but can never be the possessours. They may dig it out of the earth, but must immediately send it away to purchase cloth or bread, and it must at last remain with some people wise enough to sell much, and to buy little; to live upon their own lands, without a wish for those things which nature has denied them.

Mines are themselves of no use, without some kind of agriculture. We have, in our own country, inexhaustible stores of iron, which lie useless in the ore for want of wood. It was never the design of Providence to feed man without his own concurrence; we have from nature only what we cannot provide for ourselves; she gives us wild fruits, which art must meliorate, and drossy metals, which labour must refine.

Particular metals are valuable, because they are scarce; and they are scarce, because the mines that

yield them are emptied in time. But the surface of the earth is more liberal than its caverns. The field, which is this autumn laid naked by the sickle, will be covered, in the succeeding summer, by a new harvest; the grass, which the cattle are devouring, shoots up again when they have passed over it.

Agriculture, therefore, and agriculture alone, can support us without the help of others, in certain plenty, and genuine dignity. Whatever we buy from without, the sellers may refuse; whatever we sell, manufactured by art, the purchasers may reject; but, while our ground is covered with corn and cattle, we can want nothing; and if imagination should grow sick of native plenty, and call for delicacies or embellishments from other countries, there is nothing which corn and cattle will not purchase.

Our country is, perhaps, beyond all others, productive of things necessary to life. The pineapple thrives better between the tropicks, and better furs are found in the northern regions. But let us not envy these unnecessary privileges. Mankind cannot subsist upon the indulgencies of nature, but must be supported by her more common gifts. They must feed upon bread, and be clothed with wool; and the nation that can furnish these universal commodities, may have her ships welcomed at a thousand ports, or sit at home and receive the tribute of foreign countries, enjoy their arts, or treasure up their gold.

It is well known to those who have examined the

state of other countries, that the vineyards of France are more than equivalent to the mines of America; and that one great use of Indian gold, and Peruvian silver, is to procure the wines of Champaigne and Burgundy. The advantage is, indeed, always rising on the side of France, who will certainly have wines, when Spain, by a thousand natural or accidental causes, may want silver. But, surely, the valleys of England have more certain stores of wealth. Wines are chosen by caprice; the products of France have not always been equally esteemed; but there never was any age, or people, that reckoned bread among superfluities, when once it was known. The price of wheat and barley suffers not any variation, but what is caused by the uncertainty of seasons.

I am far from intending to persuade my countrymen to quit all other employments for that of manuring the ground. I mean only to prove, that we have, at home, all that we can want, and that, therefore, we need feel no great anxiety about the schemes of other nations for improving their arts, or extending their traffick. But there is no necessity to infer, that we should cease from commerce, before the revolution of things shall transfer it to some other regions! Such vicissitudes the world has often seen; and, therefore, such we have reason to expect. We hear many clamours of declining trade, which are not, in my opinion, always true; and many imputations of that decline to governours and ministers, which may be sometimes just, and sometimes calumnious. But it is foolish to imagine, that

any care or policy can keep commerce at a stand, which almost every nation has enjoyed and lost, and which we must expect to lose as we have long enjoyed.

There is some danger, lest our neglect of agriculture should hasten its departure. Our industry has, for many ages, been employed in destroying the woods which our ancestors have planted. It is well known that commerce is carried on by ships, and that ships are built out of trees; and, therefore, when I travel over naked plains, to which tradition has preserved the name of forests, or see hills arising on either hand barren and useless, I cannot forbear to wonder, how that commerce, of which we promise ourselves the perpetuity, shall be continued by our descendants; nor can restrain a sigh, when I think on the time, a time at no great distance, when our neighbours may deprive us of our naval influence, by refusing us their timber.

By agriculture only can commerce be perpetuated; and by agriculture alone can we live in plenty without intercourse with other nations. This, therefore, is the great art, which every government ought to protect, every proprietor of lands to practise, and every inquirer into nature to improve.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CORN LAWS[m]

BY what causes the necessaries of life have risen to a price, at which a great part of the people are unable to procure them, how the present scarcity may be remedied, and calamities of the same kind may, for the future, be prevented, is an inquiry of the first importance; an inquiry, before which all the considerations which commonly busy the legislature vanish from the view.

The interruption of trade, though it may distress part of the community, leaves the rest power to communicate relief: the decay of one manufacture may be compensated by the advancement of another: a defeat may be repaired by victory: a rupture with one nation may be balanced by an alliance with another. These are partial and slight misfortunes, which leave us still in the possession of our chief comforts. They may lop some of our superfluous pleasures, and repress some of our exorbitant hopes; but we may still retain the essential part of civil and of private happiness—the security of law, and the tranquillity of content. They are small obstructions of the stream, which raise a foam and noise, where

[m] These Considerations, for which we are indebted to Mr. Malone, who published them in 1808, or rather to his liberal publisher, Mr. Payne, were, in the opinion of Mr. Malone, written in November, 1766, when the policy of the parliamentary bounty on the exportation of corn became naturally a subject of discussion. The harvest in that year had been so deficient, and corn had risen to so high a price, that in the months of September and October there had been many insurrections in the midland counties, to which Dr. Johnson alludes; and which were of so alarming a kind, that it was necessary to repress them by military force.

they happen to be found, but, at a little distance, are neither seen nor felt, and suffer the main current to pass forward in its natural course.

But scarcity is an evil that extends at once to the whole community: that neither leaves quiet to the poor, nor safety to the rich; that, in its approaches, distresses all the subordinate ranks of mankind; and, in its extremity, must subvert government, drive the populace upon their rulers, and end in bloodshed and massacre. Those who want the supports of life will seize them wherever they can be found. If in any place there are more than can be fed, some must be expelled, or some must be destroyed.

Of this dreadful scene there is no immediate danger; but there is already evil sufficient to deserve and require all our diligence and all our wisdom. The miseries of the poor are such as cannot easily be borne; such as have already incited them, in many parts of the kingdom, to an open defiance of government, and produced one of the greatest of political evils—the necessity of ruling by immediate force.

Cæsar declared, after the battle of Munda, that he had often fought for victory, but that he had, that day, fought for life. We have often deliberated, how we should prosper; we are now to inquire, how we shall subsist.

The present scarcity is imputed, by some, to the bounty for exporting corn, which is considered as having a necessary and perpetual tendency to pour the grain of this country into other nations.

This position involves two questions: whether the

present scarcity has been caused by the bounty ? and whether the bounty is likely to produce scarcity in future times ?

It is an uncontroverted principle, that "sublata causa tollitur effectus;" if, therefore, the effect continues when the supposed cause has ceased, that effect must be imputed to some other agency.

The bounty has ceased, and the exportation would still continue, if exportation were permitted. The true reason of the scarcity is the failure of the harvest; and the cause of exportation is the like failure in other countries, where they grow less, and where they are, therefore, always nearer to the danger of want.

This want is such, that in countries where money is at a much higher value than with us, the inhabitants are yet desirous to buy our corn at a price to which our own markets have not risen.

If we consider the state of those countries, which, being accustomed to buy our corn cheaper than ourselves, when it was cheap, are now reduced to the necessity of buying it dearer than ourselves, when it is dear, we shall yet have reason to rejoice in our own exemption from the extremity of this wide-extended calamity; and, if it be necessary, to inquire why we suffer scarcity, it may be fit to consider, likewise, why we suffer yet less scarcity than our neighbours.

That the bounty upon corn has produced plenty, is apparent:

Because, ever since the grant of the bounty, agri-

culture has increased; scarce a sessions has passed without a law for enclosing commons and waste grounds:

Much land has been subjected to tillage, which lay uncultivated with little profit:

Yet, though the quantity of land has been thus increased, the rent, which is the price of land, has generally increased at the same time.

That more land is appropriated to tillage, is a proof that more corn is raised; and that the rents have not fallen, proves that no more is raised than can readily be sold.

But it is urged, that exportation, though it increases our produce, diminishes our plenty; that the merchant has more encouragement for exportation than the farmer for agriculture.

This is a paradox which all the principles of commerce and all the experience of policy concur to confute. Whatever is done for gain, will be done more, as more gain is to be obtained.

Let the effects of the bounty be minutely considered.

The state of every country, with respect to corn, is varied by the chances of the year.

Those to whom we sell our corn, must have every year either more corn than they want, or less than they want. We, likewise, are naturally subject to the same varieties.

When they have corn equal to their wants, or more, the bounty has no effect; for they will not buy what they do not want, unless our exuberance

be such as tempts them to store it for another year. This case must suppose that our produce is redundant and useless to ourselves; and, therefore, the profit of exportation produces no inconvenience.

When they want corn, they must buy of us, and buy at a higher price: in this case, if we have corn more than enough for ourselves, we are again benefited by supplying them.

But they may want when we have no superfluity. When our markets rise, the bounty ceases; and, therefore, produces no evil. They cannot buy our corn but at a higher rate than it is sold at home. If their necessities, as now has happened, force them to give a higher price, that event is no longer to be charged upon the bounty. We may then stop our corn in our ports, and pour it back upon our own markets.

It is, in all cases, to be considered, what events are physical and certain, and what are political and arbitrary.

The first effect of the bounty is the increase of agriculture, and, by consequence, the promotion of plenty. This is an effect physically good, and morally certain. While men are desirous to be rich, where there is profit there will be diligence. If much corn can be sold, much will be raised.

The second effect of the bounty is the diminution by exportation of that product which it occasioned. But this effect is political and arbitrary; we have it wholly in our own hands; we can prescribe its limits, and regulate its quantity. Whenever we feel want,

or fear it, we retain our corn, and feed ourselves upon that which was sown and raised to feed other nations.

It is, perhaps, impossible for human wisdom to go further, than to contrive a law of which the good is certain and uniform, and the evil, though possible in itself, yet always subject to certain and effectual restraints.

This is the true state of the bounty upon corn: it certainly and necessarily increases our crops, and can never lessen them but by our own permission.

That, notwithstanding the bounty, there have been, from time to time, years of scarcity, cannot be denied. But who can regulate the seasons? In the dearest years we owe to the bounty that they have not been dearer. We must always suppose part of our ground sown for our own consumption, and part in hope of a foreign sale. The time sometimes comes, when the product of all this land is scarcely sufficient: but if the whole be too little, how great would have been the deficiency, if we had sown only that part which was designed for ourselves!

"But, perhaps, if exportation were less encouraged, the superfluous stores of plentiful years might be laid up by the farmer against years of scarcity."

This may be justly answered by affirming, that, if exportation were discouraged, we should have no years of plenty. Cheapness is produced by the possibility of dearness. Our farmers, at present, plough and sow with the hope that some country will always be in want, and that they shall grow rich by

supplying. Indefinite hopes are always carried by the frailty of human nature beyond reason. While, therefore, exportation is encouraged, as much corn will be raised as the farmer can hope to sell, and, therefore, generally more than can be sold at the price of which he dreamed, when he ploughed and sowed.

The greatest part of our corn is well known to be raised by those, who pay rent for the ground which they employ, and of whom, few can bear to delay the sale of one year's produce to another.

It is, therefore, vain to hope that large stocks of grain will ever remain in private hands: he that has not sold the corn of last year, will, with diffidence and reluctance, till his field again; the accumulation of a few years would end in a vacation of agriculture, and the husbandman would apply himself to some more profitable calling.

If the exportation of corn were totally prohibited, the quantity, possible to be consumed among us, would be quickly known, and, being known, would rarely be exceeded; for why should corn be gathered which cannot be sold? We should, therefore, have little superfluity in the most favourable seasons; for the farmer, like the rest of mankind, acts in hope of success, and the harvest seldom outgoes the expectation of the spring. But for droughts or blights, we should never be provided: any intemperature of seasons would reduce us to distress, which we now only read of in our histories; what is now scarcity would then be famine.

What would be caused by prohibiting exportation, will be caused, in a less degree, by obstructing it, and, in some degree, by every deduction of encouragement; as we lessen hope, we shall lessen labour; as we lessen labour, we shall lessen plenty.

It must always be steadily remembered, that the good of the bounty is certain, and evil avoidable; that by the hope of exportation corn will be increased, and that this increase may be kept at home.

Plenty can only be produced by encouraging agriculture; and agriculture can be encouraged only by making it gainful. No influence can dispose the farmer to sow what he cannot sell; and, if he is not to have the chance of scarcity in his favour, he will take care that there never shall be plenty.

The truth of these principles our ancestors discovered by reason, and the French have now found it by experience. In this regulation we have the honour of being masters to those, who, in commercial policy, have been long accounted the masters of the world. Their prejudices, their emulation, and their vanity, have, at last, submitted to learn of us how to ensure the bounties of nature; and it forms a strange vicissitude of opinions, that should incline us to repeal the law which our rivals are adopting.

It may be speciously enough proposed, that the bounty should be discontinued sooner. Of this every man will have his own opinion; which, as no general principles can reach it, will always seem to him more reasonable than that of another. This is a question of which the state is always changing with

time and place, and which it is, therefore, very difficult to state or to discuss.

It may, however, be considered, that the change of old establishments is always an evil; and that, therefore, where the good of the change is not certain and constant, it is better to preserve that reverence and that confidence, which is produced by consistency of conduct and permanency of laws:

That, since the bounty was so fixed, the price of money has been much diminished; so that the bounty does not operate so far as when it was first fixed, but the price at which it ceases, though nominally the same, has, in effect and in reality, gradually diminished.

It is difficult to discover any reason why that bounty, which has produced so much good, and has hitherto produced no harm, should be withdrawn or abated. It is possible, that if it were reduced lower, it would still be the motive of agriculture, and the cause of plenty; but why we should desert experience for conjecture, and exchange a known for a possible good, will not easily be discovered. If, by a balance of probabilities, in which a grain of dust may turn the scale—or, by a curious scheme of calculation, in which, if one postulate in a thousand be erroneous, the deduction which promises plenty may end in famine;—if, by a specious mode of uncertain ratiocination, the critical point at which the bounty should stop, might seem to be discovered, I shall still continue to believe that it is more safe to trust what we have already tried; and cannot but

think bread a product of too much importance to be made the sport of subtilty, and the topick of hypothetical disputation.

The advantage of the bounty is evident and irrefragable. Since the bounty was given, multitudes eat wheat who did not eat it before, and yet the price of wheat has abated. What more is to be hoped from any change of practice? An alteration cannot make our condition better, and is, therefore, very likely to make it worse[n].

n This little essay on the Corn Laws was written by Dr. Johnson, which is in the very best style of that great master of reason, so early as the year 1766; and at a period when subjects of this kind were but imperfectly understood, even by those who had devoted themselves to their study. It is truly admirable to see with what vigorous alacrity his powerful mind could apply itself to an investigation so foreign from his habitual occupations. We do not know that a more sound, enlightened argument, in favour of the bounty on exportation, could be collected from all that has since been published on the subject; and, convinced as we are of the radical insufficiency of that argument, it is impossible not to be delighted with the clearness and force of the statement. There are few of his smaller productions that show the great range of Johnson's capacity in a more striking light.— Edin. Review, October, 1809. p. 175.— Ed.

LICENSERS OF THE STAGE

A COMPLETE VINDICATION FROM THE MALICIOUS AND SCANDALOUS ASPERSIONS OF MR. BROOKE, AUTHOR OF GUSTAVUS VASA; WITH A PROPOSAL FOR MAKING THE OFFICE OF LICENSER MORE EXTENSIVE AND EFFECTUAL. BY AN IMPARTIAL HAND °

IT is generally agreed by the writers of all parties, that few crimes are equal, in their degree of guilt, to that of calumniating a good and gentle, or defending a wicked and oppressive administration.

It is, therefore, with the utmost satisfaction of mind, that I reflect how often I have employed my pen in vindication of the present ministry, and their dependants and adherents; how often I have detected the specious fallacies of the advocates for independence; how often I have softened the obstinacy of patriotism; and how often triumphed over the clamour of opposition.

I have, indeed, observed but one set of men, upon whom all my arguments have been thrown away; whom neither flattery can draw to compliance, nor threats reduce to submission; and who have, notwithstanding all expedients that either invention or experience could suggest, continued to exert their abilities in a vigorous and constant opposition of all our measures.

The unaccountable behaviour of these men, the enthusiastick resolution with which, after a hundred successive defeats, they still renewed their attacks;

° This admirable piece of irony was first printed in the year 1739. A comparison of its sarcastic strokes with the serious arguments of lord Chesterfield's speech in the house of lords against the bill for licensing the stage, will be both amusing and instructive.— Ed.

the spirit with which they continued to repeat their arguments in the senate, though they found a majority determined to condemn them; and the inflexibility with which they rejected all offers of places and preferments, at last excited my curiosity so far, that I applied myself to inquire, with great diligence, into the real motives of their conduct, and to discover what principle it was that had force to inspire such unextinguishable zeal, and to animate such unwearied efforts.

For this reason I attempted to cultivate a nearer acquaintance with some of the chiefs of that party, and imagined that it would be necessary, for some time, to dissemble my sentiments, that I might learn theirs.

Dissimulation, to a true politician, is not difficult, and, therefore, I readily assumed the character of a proselyte; but found, that their principle of action was no other, than that which they make no scruple of avowing in the most publick manner, notwithstanding the contempt and ridicule to which it every day exposes them, and the loss of those honours and profits from which it excludes them.

This wild passion, or principle, is a kind of fanaticism by which they distinguish those of their own party, and which they look upon as a certain indication of a great mind. *We* have no name for it *at court;* but, among themselves, they term it by a kind of cant phrase, "a regard for posterity."

This passion seems to predominate in all their conduct, to regulate every action of their lives, and

sentiment of their minds: I have heard L——— and P—[p], when they have made a vigorous opposition, or blasted the blossom of some ministerial scheme, cry out, in the height of their exultations, "This will deserve the thanks of posterity!" And when their adversaries, as it much more frequently falls out, have outnumbered and overthrown them, they will say, with an air of revenge and a kind of gloomy triumph, "Posterity will curse you for this."

It is common among men, under the influence of any kind of phrensy, to believe that all the world has the same odd notions that disorder their own imaginations. Did these unhappy men, these deluded patriots, know how little we are concerned about posterity, they would never attempt to fright us with their curses, or tempt us to a neglect of our own interest by a prospect of their gratitude.

But so strong is their infatuation, that they seem to have forgotten even the primary law of self-preservation; for they sacrifice, without scruple, every flattering hope, every darling enjoyment, and every satisfaction of life, to this ruling passion, and appear, in every step, to consult not so much their own advantage, as that of posterity.

Strange delusion! that can confine all their thoughts to a race of men whom they neither know, nor can know; from whom nothing is to be feared, nor any thing expected; who cannot even bribe a special jury, nor have so much as a single riband to bestow.

This fondness for posterity is a kind of madness

[p] Lyttelton and Pitt.

which at Rome was once almost epidemical, and infected even the women and the children. It reigned there till the entire destruction of Carthage; after which it began to be less general, and in a few years afterwards a remedy was discovered, by which it was almost entirely extinguished.

In England it never prevailed in any such degree: some few of the ancient barons seem, indeed, to have been disordered by it; but the contagion has been, for the most part, timely checked, and our ladies have been generally free.

But there has been, in every age, a set of men, much admired and reverenced, who have affected to be always talking of posterity, and have laid out their lives upon the composition of poems, for the sake of being applauded by this imaginary generation.

The present poets I reckon amongst the most inexorable enemies of our most excellent ministry, and much doubt whether any method will effect the cure of a distemper, which, in this class of men, may be termed, not an accidental disease, but a defect in their original frame and constitution.

Mr. Brooke, a name I mention with all the detestation suitable to my character, could not forbear discovering this depravity of his mind in his very prologue, which is filled with sentiments so wild, and so much unheard of among those who frequent levees and courts, that I much doubt, whether the zealous licenser proceeded any further in his examination of his performance.

He might easily perceive that a man,

> Who bade his moral beam through every age,

was too much a bigot to exploded notions, to compose a play which he could license without manifest hazard of his office, a hazard which no man would incur untainted with the love of posterity.

We cannot, therefore, wonder that an author, wholly possessed by this passion, should vent his resentment for the licenser's just refusal, in virulent advertisements, insolent complaints, and scurrilous assertions of his rights and privileges, and proceed, in defiance of authority, to solicit a subscription.

This temper, which I have been describing, is almost always complicated with ideas of the high prerogatives of human nature, of a sacred unalienable birthright, which no man has conferred upon us, and which neither kings can take, nor senates give away; which we may justly assert whenever and by whomsoever it is attacked; and which, if ever it should happen to be lost, we may take the first opportunity to recover.

The natural consequence of these chimeras is contempt of authority, and an irreverence for any superiority but what is founded upon merit; and their notions of merit are very peculiar, for it is among them no great proof of merit to be wealthy and powerful, to wear a garter or a star, to command a regiment or a senate, to have the ear of the minister or of the king, or to possess any of those virtues and

excellencies, which, among us, entitle a man to little less than worship and prostration.

We may, therefore, easily conceive that Mr. Brooke thought himself entitled to be importunate for a license, because, in his own opinion, he deserved one, and to complain thus loudly at the repulse he met with.

His complaints will have, I hope, but little weight with the publick; since the opinions of the sect in which he is enlisted are exposed, and shown to be evidently and demonstrably opposite to that system of subordination and dependence, to which we are indebted for the present tranquillity of the nation, and that cheerfulness and readiness with which the two houses concur in all our designs.

I shall, however, to silence him entirely, or at least to show those of our party that he ought to be silent, consider singly every instance of hardship and oppression which he has dared to publish in the papers, and to publish in such a manner, that I hope no man will condemn me for want of candour in becoming an advocate for the ministry, if I can consider his advertisements as nothing less than AN APPEAL TO HIS COUNTRY.

Let me be forgiven if I cannot speak with temper of such insolence as this: is a man without title, pension, or place, to suspect the impartiality of the judgment of those who are entrusted with the administration of publick affairs? Is he, when the law is not strictly observed in regard to him, to think himself aggrieved, to tell his sentiments in print, assert

his claim to better usage, and fly for redress to another tribunal?

If such practices are permitted, I will not venture to foretell the effects of them; the ministry may soon be convinced, that such sufferers will find compassion, and that it is safer not to bear hard upon them, than to allow them to complain.

The power of licensing, in general, being firmly established by an act of parliament, our poet has not attempted to call in question, but contents himself with censuring the manner in which it has been executed; so that I am not now engaged to assert the licenser's authority, but to defend his conduct.

The poet seems to think himself aggrieved, because the licenser kept his tragedy in his hands one-and-twenty days, whereas the law allows him to detain it only fourteen.

Where will the insolence of the malecontents end? Or how are such unreasonable expectations possibly to be satisfied? Was it ever known that a man exalted into a high station, dismissed a suppliant in the time limited by law? Ought not Mr. Brooke to think himself happy that his play was not detained longer? If he had been kept a year in suspense, what redress could he have obtained? Let the poets remember, when they appear before the licenser, or his deputy, that they stand at the tribunal, from which there is no appeal permitted, and where nothing will so well become them as reverence and submission.

Mr. Brooke mentions, in his preface, his knowledge of the laws of his own country: had he ex-

tended his inquiries to the civil law, he could have found a full justification of the licenser's conduct, "Boni judicis est ampliare suam auctoritatem."

If then it be "the business of a good judge to enlarge his authority," was it not in the licenser the utmost clemency and forbearance, to extend fourteen days only to twenty-one?

I suppose this great man's inclination to perform, at least, this duty of a good judge, is not questioned by any, either of his friends or enemies. I may, therefore, venture to hope, that he will extend his power by proper degrees, and that I shall live to see a malecontent writer earnestly soliciting for the copy of a play, which he had delivered to the licenser twenty years before.

"I waited," says he, "often on the licenser, and with the utmost importunity entreated an answer." Let Mr. Brooke consider, whether that importunity was not a sufficient reason for the disappointment. Let him reflect how much more decent it had been to have waited the leisure of a great man, than to have pressed upon him with repeated petitions, and to have intruded upon those precious moments which he has dedicated to the service of his country.

Mr. Brooke was, doubtless, led into this improper manner of acting, by an erroneous notion that the grant of a license was not an act of favour, but of justice; a mistake into which he could not have fallen, but from a supine inattention to the design of the statute, which was only to bring poets into

subjection and dependence, not to encourage good writers, but to discourage all.

There lies no obligation upon the licenser to grant his sanction to a play, however excellent; nor can Mr. Brooke demand any reparation, whatever applause his performance may meet with.

Another grievance is, that the licenser assigned no reason for his refusal. This is a higher strain of insolence than any of the former. Is it for a poet to demand a licenser's reason for his proceedings? Is he not rather to acquiesce in the decision of authority, and conclude, that there are reasons which he cannot comprehend?

Unhappy would it be for men in power, were they always obliged to publish the motives of their conduct. What is power, but the liberty of acting without being accountable? The advocates for the licensing act have alleged, that the lord chamberlain has always had authority to prohibit the representation of a play for just reasons. Why then did we call in all our force to procure an act of parliament? Was it to enable him to do what he has always done? to confirm an authority which no man attempted to impair, or pretended to dispute? No, certainly: our intention was to invest him with new privileges, and to empower him to do that without reason, which with reason he could do before.

We have found, by long experience, that to lie under a necessity of assigning reasons, is very troublesome, and that many an excellent design

has miscarried by the loss of time spent unnecessarily in examining reasons.

Always to call for reasons, and always to reject them, shows a strange degree of perverseness; yet, such is the daily behaviour of our adversaries, who have never yet been satisfied with any reasons that have been offered by us.

They have made it their practice to demand, once a year, the reasons for which we maintain a standing army.

One year we told them that it was necessary, because all the nations round us were involved in war; this had no effect upon them, and, therefore, resolving to do our utmost for their satisfaction, we told them, the next year, that it was necessary, because all the nations round us were at peace.

This reason finding no better reception than the other, we had recourse to our apprehensions of an invasion from the Pretender, of an insurrection in favour of gin, and of a general disaffection among the people.

But as they continue still impenetrable, and oblige us still to assign our annual reasons, we shall spare no endeavour to procure such as may be more satisfactory than any of the former.

The reason we once gave for building barracks was, for fear of the plague; and we intend next year to propose the augmentation of our troops, for fear of a famine.

The committee, by which the act for licensing the stage was drawn up, had too long known the

inconvenience of giving reasons, and were too well acquainted with the characters of great men, to lay the lord chamberlain, or his deputy, under any such tormenting obligation.

Yet, lest Mr. Brooke should imagine that a license was refused him without just reasons, I shall condescend to treat him with more regard than he can reasonably expect, and point out such sentiments, as not only justly exposed him to that refusal, but would have provoked any ministry less merciful than the present, to have inflicted some heavier penalties upon him.

His prologue is filled with such insinuations, as no friend of our excellent government can read without indignation and abhorrence, and cannot but be owned to be a proper introduction to such scenes, as seem designed to kindle in the audience a flame of opposition, patriotism, publick spirit, and independency; that spirit which we have so long endeavoured to suppress, and which cannot be revived without the entire subversion of all our schemes.

The seditious poet, not content with making an open attack upon us, by declaring, in plain terms, that he looks upon freedom as the only source of publick happiness, and national security, has endeavoured with subtilty, equal to his malice, to make us suspicious of our firmest friends, to infect our consultations with distrust, and to ruin us by disuniting us.

This, indeed, will not be easily effected; an union

founded upon interest, and cemented by dependence, is naturally lasting; but confederacies which owe their rise to virtue, or mere conformity of sentiments, are quickly dissolved, since no individual has any thing either to hope or fear for himself, and publick spirit is generally too weak to combat with private passions.

The poet has, however, attempted to weaken our combination by an artful and sly assertion, which, if suffered to remain unconfuted, may operate, by degrees, upon our minds, in the days of leisure and retirement, which are now approaching, and, perhaps, fill us with such surmises as may at least very much embarrass our affairs.

The law by which the Swedes justified their opposition to the encroachments of the king of Denmark, he not only calls

> Great Nature's law, the law within the breast,

but proceeds to tell us, that it is

> —— stamp'd by heaven upon th' unletter'd mind.

By which he evidently intends to insinuate a maxim, which is, I hope, as false as it is pernicious, that men are naturally fond of liberty till those unborn ideas and desires are effaced by literature.

The author, if he be not a man mewed up in his solitary study, and entirely unacquainted with the conduct of the present ministry, must know that we have hitherto acted upon different principles. We have always regarded letters as great obstructions to our scheme of subordination, and have,

therefore, when we have heard of any man remarkably unlettered, carefully noted him down, as the most proper person for any employments of trust or honour, and considered him as a man, in whom we could safely repose our most important secrets.

From among the uneducated and unlettered, we have chosen not only our ambassadors and other negotiators, but even our journalists and pamphleteers; nor have we had any reason to change our measures, or to repent of the confidence which we have placed in ignorance.

Are we now, therefore, to be told, that this law is

—— stamp'd upon th' unletter'd mind?

Are we to suspect our placemen, our pensioners, our generals, our lawyers, our best friends in both houses, all our adherents among the atheists and infidels, and our very gazetteers, clerks and court-pages, as friends to independency? Doubtless this is the tendency of his assertion, but we have known them too long to be thus imposed upon: the unlettered have been our warmest and most constant defenders; nor have we omitted any thing to deserve their favour, but have always endeavoured to raise their reputation, extend their influence, and increase their number.

In his first act he abounds with sentiments very inconsistent with the ends for which the power of licensing was granted; to enumerate them all would be to transcribe a great part of his play, a task which I shall very willingly leave to others, who,

though true friends to the government, are not inflamed with zeal so fiery and impatient as mine, and, therefore, do not feel the same emotions of rage and resentment at the sight of those infamous passages, in which venality and dependence are represented, as mean in themselves, and productive of remorse and infelicity.

One line, which ought, in my opinion, to be erased from every copy, by a special act of parliament, is mentioned by Anderson, as pronounced by the hero in his sleep,

O Sweden! O my country! yet I'll save thee.

This line I have reason to believe thrown out as a kind of a watchword for the opposing faction, who, when they meet in their seditious assemblies, have been observed to lay their hands upon their breasts, and cry out, with great vehemence of accent,

O B———[q]! O my country! yet I'll save thee.

In the second scene he endeavours to fix epithets of contempt upon those passions and desires, which have been always found most useful to the ministry, and most opposite to the spirit of independency.

Base fear, the laziness of lust, gross appetites,
These are the ladders, and the grov'ling footstool
From whence the tyrant rises ————
Secure and scepter'd in the soul's servility,
He has debauched the genius of our country,
And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
Await his nod, the silken slaves of pleasure,
Or fetter'd in their fears.————

[q] Britain.

Thus is that decent submission to our superiours, and that proper awe of authority which we are taught in courts, termed base fear and the servility of the soul. Thus are those gaieties and enjoyments, those elegant amusements and lulling pleasures, which the followers of a court are blessed with, as the just rewards of their attendance and submission, degraded to lust, grossness, and debauchery. The author ought to be told, that courts are not to be mentioned with so little ceremony, and that though gallantries and amours are admitted there, it is almost treason to suppose them infected with debauchery or lust.

It is observable, that, when this hateful writer has conceived any thought of an uncommon malignity, a thought which tends, in a more particular manner, to excite the love of liberty, animate the heat of patriotism, or degrade the majesty of kings, he takes care to put it in the mouth of his hero, that it may be more forcibly impressed upon his reader. Thus Gustavus, speaking of his tatters, cries out,

> ——————— Yes, my Arvida,
> Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
> That shades a monarch's heel, I prize these weeds;
> For they are sacred to my country's freedom.

Here this abandoned son of liberty makes a full discovery of his execrable principles, the tatters of Gustavus, the usual dress of the assertors of these doctrines, are of more divinity, because they are sacred to freedom, than the sumptuous and magnificent robes of regality itself. Such sentiments are

truly detestable, nor could any thing be an aggravation of the author's guilt, except his ludicrous manner of mentioning a monarch.

The heel of a monarch, or even the print of his heel, is a thing too venerable and sacred to be treated with such levity, and placed in contrast with rags and poverty. He, that will speak contemptuously of the heel of a monarch, will whenever he can with security, speak contemptuously of his head.

These are the most glaring passages which have occurred in the perusal of the first pages; my indignation will not suffer me to proceed farther, and I think much better of the licenser, than to believe he went so far.

In the few remarks which I have set down, the reader will easily observe, that I have strained no expression beyond its natural import, and have divested myself of all heat, partiality, and prejudice.

So far, therefore, is Mr. Brooke from having received any hard or unwarrantable treatment, that the licenser has only acted in pursuance of that law to which he owes his power; a law, which every admirer of the administration must own to be very necessary, and to have produced very salutary effects.

I am, indeed, surprised that this great office is not drawn out into a longer series of deputations; since it might afford a gainful and reputable employment to a great number of the friends of the government; and, I should think, instead of having immediate recourse to the deputy-licenser himself, it might be sufficient honour for any poet, except the laureate, to

stand bareheaded in the presence of the deputy of the deputy's deputy in the nineteenth subordination.

Such a number cannot but be thought necessary, if we take into consideration the great work of drawing up an index expurgatorius to all the old plays; which is, I hope, already undertaken, or, if it has been hitherto unhappily neglected, I take this opportunity to recommend.

The productions of our old poets are crowded with passages very unfit for the ears of an English audience, and which cannot be pronounced without irritating the minds of the people.

This censure I do not confine to those lines in which liberty, natural equality, wicked ministers, deluded kings, mean arts of negotiation, venal senates, mercenary troops, oppressive officers, servile and exorbitant taxes, universal corruption, the luxuries of a court, the miseries of the people, the decline of trade, or the happiness of independency, are directly mentioned. These are such glaring passages, as cannot be suffered to pass without the most supine and criminal negligence. I hope the vigilance of the licensers will extend to all such speeches and soliloquies as tend to recommend the pleasures of virtue, the tranquillity of an uncorrupted head, and the satisfactions of conscious innocence; for though such strokes as these do not appear to a common eye to threaten any danger to the government, yet it is well known to more penetrating observers, that they have such consequences as cannot be too diligently obviated, or too cautiously avoided.

A man, who becomes once enamoured of the charms of virtue, is apt to be very little concerned about the acquisition of wealth or titles, and is, therefore, not easily induced to act in a manner contrary to his real sentiments, or to vote at the word of command; by contracting his desires, and regulating his appetites, he wants much less than other men; and every one versed in the arts of government can tell, that men are more easily influenced, in proportion as they are more necessitous.

This is not the only reason why virtue should not receive too much countenance from a licensed stage; her admirers and followers are not only naturally independent, but learn such an uniform and consistent manner of speaking and acting, that they frequently, by the mere force of artless honesty, surmount all the obstacles which subtilty and politicks can throw in their way, and obtain their ends, in spite of the most profound and sagacious ministry.

Such, then, are the passages to be expunged by the licensers: in many parts, indeed, the speeches will be imperfect, and the action appear not regularly conducted, but the poet laureate may easily supply these vacuities, by inserting some of his own verses in praise of wealth, luxury, and venality.

But alas! all those pernicious sentiments which we shall banish from the stage, will be vented from the press, and more studiously read, because they are prohibited.

I cannot but earnestly implore the friends of the government to leave no art untried, by which we

may hope to succeed in our design of extending the power of the licenser to the press, and of making it criminal to publish any thing without an IMPRIMATUR.

How much would this single law lighten the mighty burden of state affairs! With how much security might our ministers enjoy their honours, their places, their reputations, and their admirers, could they once suppress those malicious invectives which are, at present, so industriously propagated, and so eagerly read; could they hinder any arguments but their own from coming to the ears of the people, and stop effectually the voice of cavil and inquiry!

I cannot but indulge myself a little while, by dwelling on this pleasing scene, and imagining those halcyon days, in which no politicks shall be read but those of the Gazetteer, nor any poetry but that of the laureate; when we shall hear of nothing but the successful negotiations of our ministers, and the great actions of——

How much happier would this state be, than those perpetual jealousies and contentions which are inseparable from knowledge and liberty, and which have, for many years, kept this nation in perpetual commotions!

But these are times, rather to be wished for than expected, for such is the nature of our unquiet countrymen, that, if they are not admitted to the knowledge of affairs, they are always suspecting their governours of designs prejudicial to their interests; they have not the least notion of the pleas-

ing tranquillity of ignorance, nor can be brought to imagine, that they are kept in the dark, lest too much light should hurt their eyes. They have long claimed a right of directing their superiours, and are exasperated at the least mention of secrets of state.

This temper makes them very readily encourage any writer or printer, who, at the hazard of his life or fortune, will give them any information: and, while this humour prevails, there never will be wanting some daring adventurer who will write in defence of liberty, and some zealous or avaricious printer who will disperse his papers.

It has never yet been found that any power, however vigilant or despotick, has been able to prevent the publication of seditious journals, ballads, essays, and dissertations; "Considerations on the present state of affairs," and "Enquiries into the conduct of the administration[r]."

Yet I must confess, that, considering the success with which the present ministry has hitherto proceeded in their attempts to drive out of the world the old prejudices of patriotism and publick spirit, I cannot but entertain some hopes, that what has been so often attempted by their predecessors, is reserved to be accomplished by their superiour abilities.

If I might presume to advise them upon this great affair, I should dissuade them from any direct

[r] Titles of pamphlets published at this juncture. The former by lord Lyttelton. See his works, vol. i.

attempt upon the liberty of the press, which is the darling of the common people, and, therefore, cannot be attacked without immediate danger. They may proceed by a more sure and silent way, and attain the desired end without noise, detraction, or oppression.

There are scattered over this kingdom several little seminaries, in which the lower ranks of people, and the youngest sons of our nobility and gentry are taught, from their earliest infancy, the pernicious arts of spelling and reading, which they afterwards continue to practise, very much to the disturbance of their own quiet, and the interruption of ministerial measures.

These seminaries may, by an act of parliament, be, at once, suppressed; and that our posterity be deprived of all means of reviving this corrupt method of education, it may be made felony to teach to read without a license from the lord chamberlain.

This expedient, which I hope will be carefully concealed from the vulgar, must infallibly answer the great end proposed by it, and set the power of the court not only above the insults of the poets, but, in a short time, above the necessity of providing against them. The licenser, having his authority thus extended, will, in time, enjoy the title and the salary without the trouble of exercising his power, and the nation will rest, at length, in ignorance and peace.

PREFACE TO THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1738

THE usual design of addresses of this sort is to implore the candour of the publick: we have always had the more pleasing province of returning thanks, and making our acknowledgments for the kind acceptance which our monthly collections have met with.

This, it seems, did not sufficiently appear from the numerous sale and repeated impressions of our books, which have, at once, exceeded our merit and our expectation; but have been still more plainly attested by the clamours, rage, and calumnies of our competitors, of whom we have seldom taken any notice, not only because it is cruelty to insult the depressed, and folly to engage with desperation, but because we consider all their outcries, menaces, and boasts, as nothing more than advertisements in our favour, being evidently drawn up with the bitterness of baffled malice and disappointed hope; and almost discovering, in plain terms, that the unhappy authors have seventy thousand London Magazines mouldering in their warehouses, returned from all parts of the kingdom, unsold, unread, and disregarded.

Our obligations for the encouragement we have so long continued to receive, are so much the greater, as no artifices have been omitted to supplant us. Our adversaries cannot be denied the praise of industry; how far they can be celebrated for an honest industry, we leave to the decision of the publick,

and even of their brethren, the booksellers, not including those whose advertisements they obliterated to paste their invectives in our book.

The success of the Gentleman's Magazine has given rise to almost twenty imitations of it, which are either all dead, or very little regarded by the world. Before we had published sixteen months, we met with such a general approbation, that a knot of enterprising geniuses, and sagacious inventors, assembled from all parts of the town, agreed, with an unanimity natural to understandings of the same size, to seize upon our whole plan, without changing even the title. Some weak objections were, indeed, made by one of them against the design, as having an air of servility, dishonesty, and piracy; but it was concluded that all these imputations might be avoided by giving the picture of St. Paul's instead of St. John's gate; it was, however, thought indispensably necessary to add, printed in St. John's street, though there was then no printing-house in that place.

That these plagiaries should, after having thus stolen their whole design from us, charge us with robbery, on any occasion, is a degree of impudence scarcely to be matched, and certainly entitles them to the first rank among false heroes. We have, therefore, inserted their names[s], at length, in our Feb-

[s] The names are thus inserted — "The *gay* and *learned* C. Ackers, of Swanalley, printer; the *polite* and *generous* T. Cox, under the Royal Exchange; the *eloquent* and *courtly* J. Clark, of Duck-lane; and the *modest*,

ruary magazine, p. 61; being desirous that every man should enjoy the reputation he deserves.

Another attack has been made upon us by the author of Common Sense, an adversary equally malicious as the former, and equally despicable. What were his views, or what his provocations, we know not, nor have thought him considerable enough to inquire. To make him any further answer would be to descend too low; but, as he is one of those happy writers, who are best exposed by quoting their own words, we have given his elegant remarks in our magazine for December, where the reader may entertain himself, at his leisure, with an agreeable mixture of scurrility and false grammar.

For the future, we shall rarely offend him by adopting any of his performances, being unwilling to prolong the life of such pieces as deserve no other fate than to be hissed, torn, and forgotten. However, that the curiosity of our readers may not be disappointed, we shall, whenever we find him a little excelling himself, perhaps print his dissertations upon our blue covers, that they may be looked over, and stripped off, without disgracing our collection, or swelling our volumes.

We are sorry that, by inserting some of his essays, we have filled the head of this petty writer with idle chimeras of applause, laurels and immortality, nor suspected the bad effect of our regard for him,

civil, and *judicious* T. Astley, of St. Paul's Church-yard, booksellers."—All these names appeared in the title of the London Magazine, begun in 1732.

till we saw, in the postscript to one of his papers, a wild[t] prediction of the honours to be paid him by future ages. Should any mention of him be made, or his writings, by posterity, it will, probably, be in words like these: "In the Gentleman's Magazine are still preserved some essays, under the specious and inviting title of Common Sense. How papers of so little value came to be rescued from the common lot of dulness, we are, at this distance of time, unable to conceive, but imagine, that personal friendship prevailed with Urban to admit them in opposition to his judgment. If this was the reason, he met afterwards with the treatment which all deserve who patronise stupidity; for the writer, instead of acknowledging his favours, complains of injustice, robbery, and mutilation; but complains in a style so barbarous and indecent, as sufficiently confutes his own calumnies."

In this manner must this author expect to be mentioned. But of him, and our other adversaries, we beg the reader's pardon for having said so much. We hope it will be remembered, in our favour, that it is sometimes necessary to chastise insolence, and that there is a sort of men who cannot distinguish between forbearance, and cowardice.

[t] Common Sense Journal, printed by Purser of Whitefriars, March 11, 1738. "I make no doubt but after some grave historian, three or four hundred years hence, has described the corruption, the baseness, and the flattery which men run into in these times, he will make the following observation: — In the year 1737, a certain unknown author published a writing under the title of Common Sense; this writing came out weekly, in little detached essays, some of which are political, some moral, and others humorous. By the best judgment that can be formed of a work, the style and language of which is become so obsolete that it is scarce intelligible, it answers the title well," &c.

AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLICK

From the Gentleman's Magazine, March, 1739

Men' moveat cimex Pantilius? aut crucier, quod
Vellicet absentem Demetrius —— HOR.

Laudat, amat, cantat nostros mea Roma libellos,
Meque sinus omnes, me manus omnis habet.
Ecce rubet quidam, pallet, stupet, oscitat, odit.
Hoc volo, nunc nobis carmina nostra placent. MARTIAL.

IT is plain from the conduct of writers of the first class, that they have esteemed it no derogation from their characters to defend themselves against the censures of ignorance, or the calumnies of envy.

It is not reasonable to suppose, that they always judged their adversaries worthy of a formal confutation; but they concluded it not prudent to neglect the feeblest attacks; they knew that such men have often done hurt, who had not abilities to do good; that the weakest hand, if not timely disarmed, may stab a hero in his sleep; that a worm, however small, may destroy a fleet in the acorn; and that citadels, which have defied armies, have been blown up by rats.

In imitation of these great examples, we think it not absolutely needless to vindicate ourselves from the virulent aspersions of the Craftsman and Common Sense; because their accusations, though entirely groundless, and without the least proof, are urged with an air of confidence, which the unwary may mistake for consciousness of truth.

In order to set the proceedings of these calumniators in a proper light, it is necessary to inform such of our readers, as are unacquainted with the artifices of trade, that we originally incurred the displeasure

of the greatest part of the booksellers by keeping this magazine wholly in our own hands, without admitting any of that fraternity into a share of the property. For nothing is more criminal, in the opinion of many of them, than for an author to enjoy more advantage from his own works than they are disposed to allow him. This is a principle so well established among them, that we can produce some who threatened printers with their highest displeasure, for their having dared to print books for those that wrote them.

Hinc iræ, hinc odia.

This was the first ground of their animosity, which, for some time, proceeded no farther than private murmurs and petty discouragements. At length, determining to be no longer debarred from a share in so beneficial a project, a knot of them combined to seize our whole plan; and, without the least attempt to vary or improve it, began, with the utmost vigour to print and circulate the London Magazine, with such success, that in a few years, while we were printing the fifth edition of some of our earliest numbers, they had seventy thousand of their books returned, unsold, upon their hands.

It was then time to exert their utmost efforts to stop our progress, and nothing was to be left unattempted that interest could suggest. It will be easily imagined, that their influence, among those of their own trade, was greater than ours, and that their collections were, therefore, more industriously propagated by their brethren; but this, being the natural

consequence of such a relation, and, therefore, excusable, is only mentioned to show the disadvantages against which we are obliged to struggle, and, to convince the reader, that we who depend so entirely upon his approbation, shall omit nothing to deserve it.

They then had recourse to advertisements, in which they, sometimes, made faint attempts to be witty, and, sometimes, were content with being merely scurrilous; but, finding that their attacks, while we had an opportunity of returning hostilities, generally procured them such treatment as very little contributed to their reputation, they came, at last, to a resolution of excluding us from the newspapers in which they have any influence: by this means they can, at present, insult us with impunity, and without the least danger of confutation.

Their last, and, indeed, their most artful expedient, has been to hire and incite the weekly journalists against us. The first weak attempt was made by the Universal Spectator; but this we took not the least notice of, as we did not imagine it would ever come to the knowledge of the publick.

Whether there was then a confederacy between this journal and Common Sense's, as at present, between Common Sense and the Craftsman; or whether understandings of the same form receive, at certain times, the same impressions from the planets, I know not; but about that time war was, likewise, declared against us by the redoubted author of Common Sense; an adversary not so much

to be dreaded for his abilities, as for the title of his paper, behind which he has the art of sheltering himself in perfect security. He defeats all his enemies by calling them "enemies to common sense," and silences the strongest objections and the clearest reasonings by assuring his readers that, "they are contrary to common sense."

I must confess, to the immortal honour of this great writer, that I can remember but two instances of a genius able to use a few syllables to such great and so various purposes. One is, the old man in Shadwell, who seems, by long time and experience, to have attained to equal perfection with our author; for, "when a young fellow began to prate and be pert," says he, "I silenced him with my old word, Tace is Latin for a candle."

The other, who seems yet more to resemble this writer, was one Goodman, a horsestealer, who being asked, after having been found guilty by the jury, what he had to offer to prevent sentence of death from being passed upon him, did not attempt to extenuate his crime, but entreated the judge to beware of hanging a *Good man.*

This writer we thought, however injudiciously, worthy, not indeed of a reply, but of some correction, and in our magazine for December, 1738, and the preface to the supplement, treated him in such a manner as he does not seem inclined to forget.

From that time, losing all patience, he has exhausted his stores of scurrility upon us; but our readers will find, upon consulting the passages above

mentioned, that he has received too much provocation to be admitted as an impartial critick.

In our magazine of January, p. 24, we made a remark upon the Craftsman, and in p. 3, dropped some general observations upon the weekly writers, by which we did not expect to make them more our friends. Nor, indeed, did we imagine that this would have inflamed Caleb to so high a degree. His resentment has risen so much above the provocation, that we cannot but impute it more to what he fears than what he has felt. He has seen the solecisms of his brother, Common Sense, exposed, and remembers that,

—— tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.

He imagines, that he shall soon fall under the same censure, and is willing that our criticisms shall appear rather the effects of our resentment than our judgment.

For this reason, I suppose, (for I can find no other,) he has joined with Common Sense to charge us with partiality, and to recommend the London Magazine, as drawn up with less regard to interest or party. A favour, which the authors of that collection have endeavoured to deserve from them by the most servile adulation.

But, as we have a higher opinion of the candour of our readers, than to believe that they will condemn us without examination, or give up their right of judging for themselves, we are not unconcerned at this charge, though the most atrocious and malignant that can be brought against us. We entreat

only to be compared with our rivals, in full confidence, that not only our innocence, but our superiority will appear[u].

[u] These prefaces are written with that warmth of zeal which characterizes all Johnson's efforts in behalf of his friends. He ever retained a grateful sense of the kindness shown to him by Cave, his earliest patron; and, when engaged in his undertakings, he regarded Cave's enemies or opposers as his own. We can only thus vindicate his contemptuous references to the UNIVERSAL SPECTATOR, which, though far inferior to that great work whose name it bears, is very respectable; nor, on any other consideration, can we account for his derision of COMMON SENSE, a periodical, enriched by the contributions of lord Chesterfield and lord Lyttelton; or of the CRAFTSMAN, which was conducted by Amhurst, the able associate of Bolingbroke and Pulteney. Neither can we, without thus considering his relative situation, acquit Johnson of inconsistency in his strictures, who, in 1756, himself undertook the editorship of the LITERARY MAGAZINE, a work which might be viewed as the most formidable rival of the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE. The full details of his connexion with this now venerable publication are given in the preface to the index of that work, published by Mr. Nichols.— ED.

LETTER ON FIREWORKS[v]

MR. URBAN,

AMONG the principal topicks of conversation which now furnish the places of assembly with amusement, may be justly numbered the fireworks, which are advancing, by such slow degrees, and with such costly preparation.

The first reflection, that naturally arises, is upon the inequality of the effect to the cause. Here are vast sums expended, many hands, and some heads, employed, from day to day, and from month to month; and the whole nation is filled with expectations, by delineations and narratives. And in what is all this to end? in a building, that is to attract the admiration of ages? in a bridge, which may facilitate the commerce of future generations? in a work of any kind, which may stand as the model of beauty, or the pattern of virtue? To show the blessings of the late change of our state[w] by any monument of these kinds, were a project worthy not only of wealth, and power, and greatness, but of learning, wisdom, and virtue. But nothing of this kind is designed; nothing more is projected, than a crowd, a shout, and a blaze: the mighty work of artifice and contrivance is to be set on fire for no other purpose that I can see, than to show how idle pyrotechnical virtuosos have been busy. Four hours the sun will shine, and then fall from his orb, and lose his memory and his lustre together; the spectators will disperse, as their inclinations lead them, and wonder

[v] Inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine, Jan. 1749.

[w] The peace of Aix la Chapelle, 1748.

by what strange infatuation they had been drawn together. In this will consist the only propriety of this transient show, that it will resemble the war of which it celebrates the period. The powers of this part of the world, after long preparations, deep intrigues, and subtle schemes, have set Europe in a flame, and, after having gazed awhile at their fireworks, have laid themselves down where they rose, to inquire for what they have been contending.

It is remarked, likewise, that this blaze, so transitory and so useless, will be to be paid for, when it shines no longer: and many cannot forbear observing, how many lasting advantages might be purchased, how many acres might be drained, how many ways repaired, how many debtors might be released, how many widows and orphans, whom the war has ruined, might be relieved, by the expense which is now about to evaporate in smoke, and to be scattered in rockets: and there are some who think not only reason, but humanity offended, by such a trifling profusion, when so many sailors are starving, and so many churches sinking into ruins.

It is no improper inquiry, by whom this expense is at last to be borne; for certainly, nothing can be more unreasonable than to tax the nation for a blaze, which will be extinguished before many of them know it has been lighted; nor will it be consistent with the common practice, which directs, that local advantages shall be procured at the expense of the district that enjoys them. I never found, in any records, that any town petitioned the parlia-

ment for a may-pole, a bull-ring, or a skittle-ground; and, therefore, I should think, fireworks, as they are less durable, and less useful, have, at least, as little claim to the publick purse.

The fireworks are, I suppose, prepared, and, therefore, it is too late to obviate the project; but I hope the generosity of the great is not so far extinguished, as that they can, for their diversion, drain a nation already exhausted, and make us pay for pictures in the fire, which none will have the poor pleasure of beholding but themselves.

PROPOSALS FOR PRINTING

BY SUBSCRIPTION

ESSAYS IN VERSE AND PROSE

BY ANNA WILLIAMS[x]

WHEN a writer of my sex solicits the regard of the publick, some apology seems always to be expected; and it is, unhappily, too much in my power to satisfy this demand; since, how little soever I may be qualified, either by nature or study, for furnishing the world with literary entertainments, I have such motives for venturing my little performances into the light, as are sufficient to counterbalance the censure of arrogance, and to turn off my attention from the threats of criticism. The world will, perhaps, be something softened, when it shall be known, that my intention was to have lived by means more suited to my ability, from which being now cut off by a total privation of sight, I have been persuaded to suffer such essays, as I had formerly written, to be collected and fitted, if they can be fitted, by the kindness of my friends, for the press. The candour of those that have already encouraged me, will, I hope, pardon the delays incident to a work which must be performed by other eyes and other hands; and censure may, surely, be content to spare the compositions of a woman, written for amusement, and published for necessity.

[x] From the Gentleman's Magazine, Sept. 1750.

A PROJECT FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF AUTHORS[y]

TO THE VISITER

SIR,

I KNOW not what apology to make for the little dissertation which I have sent, and which I will not deny that I have sent with design that you should print it. I know that admonition is very seldom grateful, and that authors are eminently cholerick; yet, I hope, that you, and every impartial reader, will be convinced, that I intend the benefit of the publick, and the advancement of knowledge; and that every reader, into whose hands this shall happen to fall, will rank himself among those who are to be excepted from general censure.

I am, Sir, your humble servant.

Scire velim quare toties mihi, Nævole, tristis
Occurras, fronte obducta, ceu Marsya victus. JUV.

There is no gift of nature, or effect of art, however beneficial to mankind, which, either by casual deviations, or foolish perversions, is not sometimes mischievous. Whatever may be the cause of happiness, may be made, likewise, the cause of misery. The medicine, which, rightly applied, has power to cure, has, when rashness or ignorance prescribes it, the same power to destroy.

I have computed, at some hours of leisure, the loss and gain of literature, and set the pain which it produces against the pleasure. Such calculations are, indeed, at a great distance from mathematical exactness, as they arise from the induction of a few

[y] From the Universal Visiter, April, 1756.

particulars, and from observations made rather according to the temper of the computist, than the nature of things. But such a narrow survey as can be taken, will easily show that letters cause many blessings, and inflict many calamities; that there is scarcely an individual who may not consider them as immediately or mediately influencing his life, as they are chief instruments of conveying knowledge, and transmitting sentiments; and almost every man learns, by their means, all that is right or wrong in his sentiments and conduct.

If letters were considered only as means of pleasure, it might well be doubted, in what degree of estimation they should be held; but when they are referred to necessity, the controversy is at an end; it soon appears, that though they may sometimes incommode us, yet human life would scarcely rise, without them, above the common existence of animal nature; we might, indeed, breathe and eat in universal ignorance, but must want all that gives pleasure or security, all the embellishments and delights, and most of the conveniencies, and comforts of our present condition.

Literature is a kind of intellectual light, which, like the light of the sun, may sometimes enable us to see what we do not like; but who would wish to escape unpleasing objects, by condemning himself to perpetual darkness?

Since, therefore, letters are thus indispensably necessary; since we cannot persuade ourselves to lose their benefits, for the sake of escaping their

mischiefs, it is worth our serious inquiry, how their benefits may be increased, and their mischiefs lessened; by what means the harvest of our studies may afford us more corn and less chaff; and how the roses of the gardens of science may gratify us more with their fragrance, and prick us less with their thorns.

I shall not, at present, mention the more formidable evils which the misapplication of literature produces, nor speak of churches infected with heresy, states inflamed with sedition, or schools infatuated with hypothetical fictions. These are evils which mankind have always lamented, and which, till mankind grow wise and modest, they must, I am afraid, continue to lament, without hope of remedy. I shall now touch only on some lighter and less extensive evils, yet such, as are sufficiently heavy to those that feel them, and are, of late, so widely diffused, as to deserve, though, perhaps, not the notice of the legislature, yet the consideration of those whose benevolence inclines them to a voluntary care of publick happiness.

It was long ago observed by Virgil, and, I suppose, by many before him, that "bees do not make honey for their own use;" the sweets which they collect in their laborious excursions, and store up in their hives with so much skill, are seized by those who have contributed neither toil nor art to the collection; and the poor animal is either destroyed by the invader, or left to shift without a supply. The condition is nearly the same of the gatherer of

honey, and the gatherer of knowledge. The bee and the author work alike for others, and often lose the profit of their labour. The case, therefore, of authors, however hitherto neglected, may claim regard. Every body of men is important, according to the joint proportion of their usefulness and their number. Individuals, however they may excel, cannot hope to be considered, singly, as of great weight in the political balance; and multitudes, though they may, merely by their bulk, demand some notice, are yet not of much value, unless they contribute to ease the burden of society, by cooperating to its prosperity.

Of the men, whose condition we are now examining, the usefulness never was disputed; they are known to be the great disseminators of knowledge, and guardians of the commonwealth; and, of late, their number has been so much increased, that they are become a very conspicuous part of the nation. It is not now, as in former times, when men studied long, and passed through the severities of discipline, and the probation of publick trials, before they presumed to think themselves qualified for instructers of their countrymen; there is found a nearer way to fame and erudition, and the inclosures of literature are thrown open to every man whom idleness disposes to loiter, or whom pride inclines to set himself to view. The sailor publishes his journal, the farmer writes the process of his annual labour; he that succeeds in his trade, thinks his wealth a proof of his understanding, and boldly

tutors the publick; he that fails, considers his miscarriage as the consequence of a capacity too great for the business of a shop, and amuses himself in the Fleet with writing or translating. The last century imagined, that a man, composing in his chariot, was a new object of curiosity; but how much would the wonder have been increased by a footman studying behind it[z]! There is now no class of men without its authors, from the peer to the thrasher; nor can the sons of literature be confined any longer to Grub street or Moorfields; they are spread over all the town, and all the country, and fill every stage of habitation, from the cellar to the garret.

It is well known, that the price of commodities must always fall, as the quantity is increased, and that no trade can allow its professors to be multiplied beyond a certain number. The great misery of writers proceeds from their multitude. We easily perceive, that in a nation of clothiers, no man could have any cloth to make but for his own back; that in a community of bakers every man must use his own bread; and what can be the case of a nation of authors, but that every man must be content to read his book to himself? For, surely, it is vain to hope, that of men labouring at the same occupation, any will prefer the work of his neighbour to his own; yet this expectation, wild as it is, seems to be indulged by many of the writing race, and, therefore, it can be no wonder, that like all

[z] Dodsley's Muse in Livery was composed under these circumstances. Boswell's Life, ii.

other men, who suffer their minds to form inconsiderate hopes, they are harassed and dejected with frequent disappointments.

If I were to form an adage of misery, or fix the lowest point to which humanity could fall, I should be tempted to name the life of an author. Many universal comparisons there are by which misery is expressed. We talk of a man teased like a bear at the stake, tormented like a toad under a harrow, or hunted like a dog with a stick at his tail; all these are, indeed, states of uneasiness, but what are they to the life of an author; of an author worried by criticks, tormented by his bookseller, and hunted by his creditors! Yet such must be the case of many among the retailers of knowledge, while they continue thus to swarm over the land; and, whether it be by propagation or contagion, produce new writers to heighten the general distress, to increase confusion, and hasten famine.

Having long studied the varieties of life, I can guess by every man's walk, or air, to what state of the community he belongs. Every man has noted the legs of a tailor, and the gait of a seaman; and a little extension of his physiognomical acquisitions will teach him to distinguish the countenance of an author. It is my practice, when I am in want of amusement, to place myself for an hour at Temple-bar, or any other narrow pass much frequented, and examine, one by one, the looks of the passengers; and I have commonly found, that, between the hours of eleven and four, every sixth man is an author.

They are seldom to be seen very early in the morning, or late in the evening, but about dinner time they are all in motion, and have one uniform eagerness in their faces, which gives little opportunity of discerning their hopes or fears, their pleasures or their pains.

But, in the afternoon, when they have all dined, or composed themselves to pass the day without a dinner, their passions have full play, and I can perceive one man wondering at the stupidity of the publick, by which his new book has been totally neglected; another cursing the French who fright away literary curiosity by their threats of an invasion; another swearing at his bookseller, who will advance no money without copy; another perusing, as he walks, his publisher's bill; another murmuring at an unanswerable criticism; another determining to write no more to a generation of barbarians; and another resolving to try, once again, whether he cannot awaken the drowsy world to a sense of his merit.

It sometimes happens, that there may be remarked among them a smile of complacence, or a strut of elevation; but, if these favourites of fortune are carefully watched for a few days, they seldom fail to show the transitoriness of human felicity; the crest falls, the gaiety is ended, and there appear evident tokens of a successful rival, or a fickle patron.

But of all authors, those are the most wretched, who exhibit their productions on the theatre, and who are to propitiate first the manager, and then the publick. Many an humble visitant have I followed

to the doors of these lords of the drama, seen him touch the knocker with a shaking hand, and, after long deliberation, adventure to solicit entrance by a single knock; but I never staid to see them come out from their audience, because my heart is tender, and being subject to frights in bed, I would not willingly dream of an author.

That the number of authors is disproportionate to the maintenance, which the publick seems willing to assign them; that there is neither praise nor meat for all who write, is apparent from this; that, like wolves in long winters, they are forced to prey on one another. The reviewers and critical reviewers, the remarkers and examiners, can satisfy their hunger only by devouring their brethren. I am far from imagining that they are naturally more ravenous or blood-thirsty than those on whom they fall with so much violence and fury; but they are hungry, and hunger must be satisfied; and these savages, when their bellies are full, will fawn on those whom they now bite.

The result of all these considerations amounts only to this, that the number of writers must at last be lessened, but by what method this great design can be accomplished, is not easily discovered. It was lately proposed, that every man who kept a dog should pay a certain tax, which, as the contriver of ways and means very judiciously observed, would either destroy the dogs, or bring in money. Perhaps, it might be proper to lay some such tax upon authors, only the payment must be lessened in pro-

portion as the animal, upon which it is raised, is less necessary; for many a man that would pay for his dog, will dismiss his dedicator. Perhaps, if every one who employed or harboured an author, was assessed a groat a year, it would sufficiently lessen the nuisance without destroying the species.

But no great alteration is to be attempted rashly. We must consider how the authors, which this tax shall exclude from their trade, are to be employed. The nets used in the herring-fishery can furnish work but for few, and not many can be employed as labourers at the foundation of the new bridge. There must, therefore, be some other scheme formed for their accommodation, which the present state of affairs may easily supply. It is well known, that great efforts have been lately made to man the fleet, and augment the army, and loud complaints are made of useful hands forced away from their families into the service of the crown. This offensive exertion of power may be easily avoided, by opening a few houses for the entertainment of discarded authors, who would enter into the service with great alacrity, as most of them are zealous friends of every present government; many of them are men of able bodies, and strong limbs, qualified, at least, as well for the musket as the pen; they are, perhaps, at present a little emaciated and enfeebled, but would soon recover their strength and flesh with good quarters and present pay.

There are some reasons for which they may seem particularly qualified for a military life. They are

used to suffer want of every kind; they are accustomed to obey the word of command from their patrons and their booksellers; they have always passed a life of hazard and adventure, uncertain what may be their state on the next day; and, what is of yet more importance, they have long made their minds familiar to danger, by descriptions of bloody battles, daring undertakings, and wonderful escapes. They have their memories stored with all the stratagems of war, and have, over and over, practised, in their closets, the expedients of distress, the exultation of triumph, and the resignation of heroes sentenced to destruction.

Some, indeed, there are, who, by often changing sides in controversy, may give just suspicion of their fidelity, and whom I should think likely to desert for the pleasure of desertion, or for a farthing a month advanced in their pay. Of these men I know not what use can be made, for they can never be trusted, but with shackles on their legs. There are others whom long depression, under supercilious patrons, has so humbled and crushed, that they will never have steadiness to keep their ranks. But for these men there may be found fifes and drums, and they will be well enough pleased to inflame others to battle, if they are not obliged to fight themselves.

It is more difficult to know what can be done with the ladies of the pen, of whom this age has produced greater numbers than any former time. It is, indeed, common for women to follow the camp, but no prudent general will allow them in such

numbers as the breed of authoresses would furnish. Authoresses are seldom famous for clean linen, therefore, they cannot make laundresses; they are rarely skilful at their needle, and cannot mend a soldier's shirt; they will make bad sutlers, being not much accustomed to eat. I must, therefore, propose, that they shall form a regiment of themselves, and garrison the town which is supposed to be in most danger of a French invasion. They will, probably, have no enemies to encounter; but, if they are once shut up together, they will soon disencumber the publick by tearing out the eyes of one another.

The great art of life is to play for much, and to stake little; which rule I have kept in view through this whole project; for, if our authors and authoresses defeat our enemies, we shall obtain all the usual advantages of victory; and, if they should be destroyed in war, we shall lose only those who had wearied the publick, and whom, whatever be their fate, nobody will miss.

PREFACE TO THE LITERARY MAGAZINE, 1756

TO THE PUBLICK

THERE are some practices which custom and prejudice have so unhappily influenced, that to observe or neglect them is equally censurable. The promises made by the undertakers of any new design, every man thinks himself at liberty to deride, and yet every man expects, and expects with reason, that he who solicits the publick attention, should give some account of his pretensions.

We are about to exhibit to our countrymen a new monthly collection, to which the well-deserved popularity of the first undertaking of this kind, has now made it almost necessary to prefix the name of Magazine. There are, already, many such periodical compilations, of which we do not envy the reception, nor shall dispute the excellence. If the nature of things would allow us to indulge our wishes, we should desire to advance our own interest, without lessening that of any other; and to excite the curiosity of the vacant, rather than withdraw that which other writers have already engaged.

Our design is to give the history, political and literary, of every month; and our pamphlets must consist, like other collections, of many articles unconnected and independent on each other.

The chief political object of an Englishman's attention must be the great council of the nation, and we shall, therefore, register all publick proceedings with particular care. We shall not attempt to give

any regular series of debates, or to amuse our readers with senatorial rhetorick. The speeches inserted in other papers have been long known to be fictitious, and produced sometimes by men who never heard the debate, nor had any authentick information. We have no design to impose thus grossly on our readers, and shall, therefore, give the naked arguments used in the discussion of every question, and add, when they can be obtained, the names of the speakers.

As the proceedings in parliament are unintelligible, without a knowledge of the facts to which they relate, and of the state of the nations to which they extend their influence, we shall exhibit monthly a view, though contracted, yet distinct, of foreign affairs, and lay open the designs and interests of those nations which are considered by the English either as friends or enemies.

Of transactions in our own country, curiosity will demand a more particular account, and we shall record every remarkable event, extraordinary casualty, uncommon performance, or striking novelty, and shall apply our care to the discovery of truth, with very little reliance on the daily historians.

The lists of births, marriages, deaths and burials, will be so drawn up that, we hope, very few omissions or mistakes will be found, though some must be expected to happen in so great a variety, where there is neither leisure nor opportunity for minute information.

It is intended that lists shall be given of all the

officers and persons in publick employment; and that all the alterations shall be noted, as they happen, by which our list will be a kind of court-register, always complete.

The literary history necessarily contains an account of the labours of the learned, in which, whether we shall show much judgment or sagacity, must be left to our readers to determine; we can promise only justness and candour. It is not to be expected, that we can insert extensive extracts or critical examinations of all the writings, which this age of writers may offer to our notice. A few only will deserve the distinction of criticism, and a few only will obtain it. We shall try to select the best and most important pieces, and are not without hope, that we may sometimes influence the publick voice, and hasten the popularity of a valuable work.

Our regard will not be confined to books; it will extend to all the productions of science. Any new calculation, a commodious instrument, the discovery of any property in nature, or any new method of bringing known properties into use or view, shall be diligently treasured up, wherever found.

In a paper designed for general perusal, it will be necessary to dwell most upon things of general entertainment. The elegant trifles of literature, the wild strains of fancy, the pleasing amusements of harmless wit, shall, therefore, be considered as necessary to our collection. Nor shall we omit researches into antiquity, explanation of coins or inscriptions, disquisitions on controverted history,

conjectures on doubtful geography, or any other of those petty works upon which learned ingenuity is sometimes employed.

To these accounts of temporary transactions and fugitive performances, we shall add some dissertations on things more permanent and stable; some inquiries into the history of nature, which has hitherto been treated, as if mankind were afraid of exhausting it. There are, in our own country, many things and places worthy of note that are yet little known, and every day gives opportunities of new observations which are made and forgotten. We hope to find means of extending and perpetuating physiological discoveries; and with regard to this article, and all others, entreat the assistance of curious and candid correspondents.

We shall labour to attain as much exactness as can be expected in such variety, and shall give as much variety as can consist with reasonable exactness; for this purpose, a selection has been made of men qualified for the different parts of the work, and each has the employment assigned him, which he is supposed most able to discharge.

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